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MISCELLANIES

OLD AND NEW.

BY

JOHN COTTON SMITH, D.D.

SECOND EDITION.

NEW-YORK:
T. WHITTAKER,
No. 2 BIBLE HOUSE.
1876.

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PREFACE.

THE lectures, essays, and reviews, in this volume, have been published at different times, during the last seventeen years, and for the most part in the order in which they are here arranged. The principal reason for publishing them, in their present form, is that they may stand in their chronological order, and that a unity of purpose, which guided their preparation, may more clearly appear.

That purpose has been to show the bearing of certain literary, social, scientific, and religious questions, which, from time to time, have interested the public mind, upon great principles which underlie all history and life, and find their fullest expression and embodiment in Christianity. In the review of Mr. Gladstone's "Homer and the Homeric Age," it was my purpose to show, from the facts which Mr. Gladstone has, with such wonderful industry and learning, accumulated, that the civilization, which has been most potent in the world's history, at the earliest period at which we can catch its development, was linked in with a religious system which rested upon a primitive revelation, and formed one of the main

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lines upon which the preparations for Christianity proceed. In the essay on the "Suspense and Restoration of Faith," I designed, as far as possible, to refute the idea that Christianity, which is thus rooted in the world's history, is destined to pass away; to show that the permanent elements in it are the evangelical faith and the apostolic order, and that the faith stands related to the Church as a visible and perpetual institution in society. In the review of the "Oxford Essays," it was my purpose to present Christianity as necessarily a supernatural religion, and to vindicate its miraculous element from assaults made upon it by some of those who are nominally its adherents. The essay on the "United States a Nation" is a plea for the national character and integrity of the Union. The importance of this, in this connection, will be apparent, since Christianity is very largely dependent upon the national life and historical continuity of the State. In the lecture on "Evolution and a Personal Creator," I have endeavored to show the relations of Christianity to scientific inquiry and discovery, especially in regard to the origin and development of life. In the lecture on "Dante," the main purpose is to consider some of the principles of Christian reform, of which Dante was so wonderful an exponent.

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In reviewing the positions which have been taken, and the arguments used in these papers, there are a few things which I would like to say by way of explanation. In the "Suspense and Restoration of Faith," I have spoken of the philosophy of Sir William Hamilton in its relation to the religious tendencies of the age. I should be sorry to have it inferred from what I have said that I am a disciple of that philosophy. My object was simply to show that a suspense of faith, for any protracted period, is not probable, since the Hamiltonian philosophy, which is the most influential, in the present age, compels us to choose either faith or universal scepticism.

In the "Oxford Essays and Reviews," I expressed certain opinions in regard to the attitude of science at that period. I still think that those opinions were correct; but they are undoubtedly untenable in regard to the attitude of science at the present day. Prof. Powell, in urging his views in regard to miracles, had referred to Mr. Darwin's work on the "Origin of Species" as substantiating "on undeniable grounds the origination of new species by natural causes." In the condition of scientific inquiry, at that period, I preferred meeting this statement of Prof. Powell by the assertion that it was untrue in the sense of implying that Mr. Darwin's theory had obtained the general recognition of scientific men. At the same

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time, I said: "Whether Mr. Darwin's theory, supposing it to be true, confirms Prof. Powell's views, we do not feel called upon to decide. We can understand that it might be consistent with an enlightened Theism." Within the last few years, however, the attitude of science in this respect has decidedly changed, and in the lecture on "Evolution and a Personal Creator," delivered in March, 1874, I have endeavored to show that the theory of evolution is not necessarily inconsistent with any essential principle of natural religion or of Christianity.

In the same paper, the "Oxford Essays and Reviews," I have, in a note, made use of the theory of probability, in considering the subject of the resurrection of Christ. I am now satisfied that such a calculation of probabilities can not be judiciously applied to this question. It is properly applied to the calculation of chances, where out of a vast number of results, one is just as probable as another; although the chances against any one particular result are immensely great. I am unwilling to avail myself of an argument which, while it is peculiarly calculated to impress the imagination, may be fallacious. The probabilities as to the fact of the resurrection of Christ are of a different order, and are not readily subjected to mathematical calculation.

Two of the papers in this volume—that upon Mr.

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Gladstone's "Homer and the Homeric Age," and that upon Dante—were written, the former before the publication of Mr. Bryant's translation of the "Iliad" and the "Odyssey," and the latter before the publication of Mr. Longfellow's translation of the "Divina Commedia." I can not refrain, however, from expressing my sense of the indebtedness of the world, for a better understanding of Homer and Dante, and therefore of Christian history and philosophy, to the labors of Mr. Bryant and Mr. Longfellow. There could scarcely be an old age more serene and beautiful than that which has been so far spent, by Mr. Bryant, chiefly in the translation of the "Iliad" and the "Odyssey." The aged translator and poet recalls to our minds the long evening of the life of Sophocles, and to him might be fittingly applied the words inscribed upon the tomb of Sophocles:

> "In art, with highest glory crowned,
> In outward form of all most venerable."

Although the lecture on Dante was originally published before Mr. Longfellow's translation appeared, I have, in this volume, availed myself of extracts from the work, and of suggestions in the admirable notes by which it is accompanied. The fame of Mr. Longfellow, as a poet, and the incomparable felicities of his translation, are in danger of withdrawing our attention from the wealth of learning and the profound

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philosophy with which he has illustrated the "Divina Commedia." Though Mr. Longfellow, in the "Morituri Salutamus," has ranked himself with old men, it may well be hoped that there is a long period of honorable labor before one of whom it may be said, as it was of a Greek poet, that he is "loved every way by all men," or, in the words of an epigram of Theocritus,

πολλὰ γὰρ πὸτ' τὰν ζόαν τοῖς παισὶν
εἶπε χρήσιμα.
Μεγάλα χάρις αὐτῷ.

"Full many a rule of life he drew,
Still pointing to the fair, the true,
The youthful mind. High favor crown the bard."

I am well aware that the subjects here considered have been treated with greater ability by many other writers. Nevertheless, these papers have been prepared and published under the conviction that it is the mission of the ministers of religion to give emphasis and force, within such spheres of influence as may be open to them, to the relations of Christianity to every department of life.

J. C. S.

Ascension Rectory,
New-York City, November, 1875.

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GLADSTONE'S

HOMER AND THE HOMERIC AGE.*

At a time when the importance of classical culture is so little appreciated, it is refreshing to meet with such noble contributions as these volumes afford toward the settlement of those great questions which relate to the Poems and the Age of Homer. We can not but feel a special pleasure, also, in the fact that these volumes are the production of one who labors under a constant pressure of the most important public duties; for it assures us that there are some who, in the midst of the cares and

* *Studies on Homer and the Homeric Age.* By the Right Hon. W. E. GLADSTONE, D.C.L., M.P. for the University of Oxford. 3 vols. Oxford. At the University Press. 1858.

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perplexities of office, love to renew the generous studies of their youth, and to gather broad and comprehensive views and a calm and elevated wisdom, from a fresh perusal of those works which stirred the imagination and roused the enthusiasm of their early years. The world owes a debt of gratitude to Mr. Gladstone for the new light which he has thrown upon the marvellous wealth and beauty of the poems of Homer. His abundant illustrations of every department of his subject, and his fine taste and discrimination in critical analysis, have added vastly to the interest and delight with which even the Iliad and the Odyssey are read. But we regard Mr. Gladstone as most of all entitled to our gratitude for the ability with which he has resisted some of the most dangerous historical errors of the age, and vindicated some of the most important principles of a Christian Philosophy of History.

One would hardly have expected to find, in a work upon the Poems and Age of Homer, a discussion of questions which affect the view

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which we take of the whole history of the world; and by which the ground-plan, so to speak, of that History must be determined.

But these poems, it must be remembered, furnish us with peculiar advantages for such universal investigations. They stand at the fountain-head of secular literature. They furnish us with the earliest information which we possess of that wonderful civilization which they themselves did so much to mould, and which has come down from that age to us. They present to us the only picture which we have of that heroic race and age, in which the human side of our complex civilization had its rise. Now we are greatly mistaken if these facts do not furnish us with some most valuable results. We are fully aware of the great difficulty which attends these investigations; and that, in many respects, probability must be our only guide; but we are satisfied that a calm and dispassionate consideration of these facts will convince us that we stand on solid ground, and that our inquiries only confirm

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the great principles of a Christian Philosophy of History.

We are met at the beginning of these investigations with a difficulty which must first be considered. Mr. Grote, whose extraordinary ability in the department of Grecian History must be admitted, and whose opinions are entitled to profound respect, rejects all incidents previous to the Olympiad of Corœbus, or 776 B.C., as not reducible to history or chronology.* If this be so, the poems of Homer are without value, as a basis of historical investigation. But we think Mr. Gladstone has shown conclusively that we are not compelled to this limitation of the historical field, and that he has materially strengthened the position of Bishop Thirlwall and Mr. Clinton as to the possibility of extracting historical data from what Mr. Grote calls legendary Greece. Without attempting a discussion of this question, it seems to us a most unreasonable assumption that the legendary lore of any na-

* Grote's History of Greece, ii. p. 34.

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tion is utterly destitute of historical foundation. Nothing could be more natural than for a people to surround the actual facts of their early history with a mass of exaggeration which, in the course of time, would take the form of mythical narratives. It is more reasonable to suppose that there is a basis of fact in all mythologies, and that it is the historical truth in the first place which obtains credence, while the false additions are of gradual growth, than that a system of mythology wholly and entirely false, without any historical foundation, comes to be universally believed. And if there is this historical basis in the legends of Greece, why should it be regarded as impossible to separate the true from the false? It is an easy method to reject the whole, on account of the mythical character of a part; but this principle would lead to the rejection of a vast deal of history of more modern date. It is in fact a needless skepticism, and is inconsistent with that bold and patient spirit of inquiry which expects to obtain some true results where there is any basis of fact. To say

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that we have no evidence that there is any thing even approximately correct in Grecian chronology before 776 B.C.; that it is impossible to tell whether there are any real personages in the Iliad and Odyssey; that all inquiries are fruitless as to the race which inhabited Greece before the Hellenic period, is a voluntary abandonment, which we find it difficult to understand, of a field most fertile in historical results.

When we examine the claims of the poems of Homer to be considered as valuable historical documents, we find that the Greeks so regarded them, and regarded no others in the same light. And this harmonizes most perfectly with what appears to be the intention of the poems themselves. The minute accuracy which is everywhere evident, the digressions from the story which are readily explained if we suppose them to be of historical interest, but are inexplicable on any other supposition, and the artistic blending and yet easy separation of the natural and supernatural, all lead us to a probable basis of fact.

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And when we bring to bear upon this question the light which Comparative Philology, Ethnology, and other cognate studies afford, we arrive at many results upon which we can confidently rely, and in regard to which all that the historical skeptic can say is, that they do not absolutely exclude the possibility of doubt.

It makes little difference in regard to the historical value of the Iliad and Odyssey, whether we regard them as the production of one or of many authors. If any one finds the difficulties of the case diminished by the supposition of a multiplicity, in one age, of such extraordinary poets as Homer, he is welcome to the relief thus afforded. It is enough to say that there has been in recent German critics a great reaction, on this point, from the skepticism of Wolf, and that the best English scholars maintain that the Iliad and Odyssey are the production of a single mind. The only point which is vital in this inquiry is, whether the author (supposing that there was but one) of these poems was in a position to

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give a correct representation of the manners, customs, morals, and religion of the heroic age, and whether such a representation is actually contained in these poems as they have come down to us.

The evidence arising from the difficulty of forging ancient documents is very strong as to the genuineness of the poems of Homer. The fact that in the earliest times in Greece, of which we have any record, they were rehearsed in public, at festivals, by rhapsodists, is presumptive evidence that they were handed down without material alteration: for the errors of one rhapsodist would be sure to be corrected by the others. And since the time we know them to have been committed to writing, there has been but little danger of any serious corruption of the text. If, therefore, these poems may be considered as genuine, it only remains for us to inquire whether Homer lived in such proximity to the age which he describes, that his representation of it can be relied upon. In this inquiry let it be observed that it matters very little whether

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we can fix upon the exact period which is here described. The question is whether Homer was sufficiently near to it, whenever it was, to be considered as a competent witness to its various phenomena. Eratosthenes places the Trojan expedition at 1192 B.C., and considers Homer as 100 years later. Aristotle regards him as 140 years later, and Mr. Clinton, whose authority on this subject is very great, adopts the opinion of Aristotle.* Mr. Gladstone thinks there is evidence of even greater proximity to the war. The absence of all allusion, in the poems, to the Dorian conquest and the revolution which it produced in Greece; the thousand undesigned indications that the poet is living in a state of society gradually altering but essentially unchanged from that which he describes; and his own testimony that the period from Pirithous, who had a son in the siege, to the siege itself, was equal to the period from the siege to his own day; all these, with other considerations, seem

* Clinton's Fasti Hellenici, p. 70.

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to indicate that Homer was within at least two or three generations from the Trojan war.

Now it is evident that Homer intended to give a substantially correct account of the heroic age of Greece. And his proximity to that age not only enabled him to give a correct representation of it, but rendered it impossible for him to give any other; for his contemporaries were as near to it as himself, and would have rejected any other than a truthful picture. There is every evidence in the Iliad and Odyssey that the age described and the age of the author were in such close proximity that the one did not differ materially from the other. But however near to or remote from the heroic age, the author or authors of these poems may have been, it is evident beyond all question that such an age did exist; and that the manners, customs, morality, and religious ideas and usages here described were actually characteristic of a period known as the heroic age of Greece, and that is all that is absolutely necessary to serve our present purpose.

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We propose now to present some of the most striking characteristics of this age in reference to politics, morals, and religion, and then show the relation of our results to some of the great problems of universal history. In this inquiry we shall principally follow the lead of Mr. Gladstone, but shall resort, as may seem necessary, to the views of other authorities in the Homeric controversy.

There is a wide difference between Mr. Grote and Mr. Gladstone in their estimate of the polities of the heroic age. Both agree, of course, as to the constituent elements of Grecian society. The king, the council, and the agora are clearly presented to us as the institutions of the state. Besides the chiefs, there were the people or freemen, and the slaves.

The council was an assembly of the chiefs for conference with the king; the agora was a public assembly of the king, chiefs, and people. Mr. Grote's view of the matter is, that the king was virtually supreme, and that the council and agora were merely organs by which his will was executed, and were in no sense

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restrictions upon his authority. The council of the chiefs was simply for the advice and information of the king, and never for the purpose of arresting any mischievous measure. The agora is simply for discussion on the part of the chiefs before the people. No proposition is submitted to vote. There seems to be no positive function in it, and the agora, in his view, is "passive," "recipient," and presents a "repulsive view of the degradation of the mass of the people before the chiefs."

Mr. Gladstone's conception of the king, council, and agora is widely different from this, and seems to be fully sustained by an appeal to Homer. He regards the king as possessed, indeed, of great authority, but as dependent for the reverence and obedience of his subjects upon his own personal superiority. The council of the chiefs is not only for the advice of the king, but the king is there freely criticised and resisted; while, in the agora, his plans are fully discussed and sometimes overthrown. The freedom with which Agamemnon is addressed, and sometimes even reviled,

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not only by the confederate kings, but also by the chiefs, and the occasions on which he is actually defeated in the agora, show that there was any thing but a slavish submission to his will, either among the chiefs or the people. Nothing is more remarkable in the representation of the heroic age than the prominence and influence of public speaking. The king must have the power of persuasion, and oratory was regarded as the principal title to respect and admiration. The freedom with which public measures could be criticised, the fact that an agora might be called without the agency of Agamemnon, the publicity of every thing connected with the state, and the great regard which was had to the power of persuasion, all show the influence of public opinion. Despotism is impossible, as the whole history of the world shows, where there is perfect freedom of speech, and never did that exist in a higher degree than as it is represented to us in the magnificent orations of the Iliad. Mr. Grote says that there was no positive function in the agora, and that there was no submitting

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of measures to a popular vote; but it is inconceivable that these extraordinary efforts of oratory were understood to be for no practical end, and that the will of Agamemnon was, at any rate, to prevail. The very assembling of the people as a regular institution, and the varied powers of persuasion brought to bear upon them, compel us to the belief that they were to decide between opposing plans and counsels, and though it might not have been by vote, yet, by some method, the import of which was well understood, they gave or withheld the public sanction to the measures proposed.

Public sentiment is so powerful in heroic Greece that it has a sort of personification in Homer. It is represented somewhat in the same light as the Chorus in the Greek tragedies, and this public sentiment finds its expression and exercises its influence upon matters of common interest in the council and the agora.

We find in the polities of the heroic age, as represented to us in the poems of Homer, a

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very remarkable degree of personal freedom, which is by no means the sort of freedom observed in barbarous tribes; for it is associated with organized institutions and a rude, it may be, but yet well-established machinery of state. We find also, as we have seen, a general participation of the people in public affairs. Here, then, are the principles of those free institutions which we enjoy at the present day. As far back as we can go in the history of civilization, we find a balancing of powers in the state, and restrictions upon sovereign authority, arising from the will of the people, legitimately expressed. We shall not, of course, expect to find here that elaborate system of government, those fixed and invariable laws, and that impartial administration of justice which are to be found in a more fully developed state of society. But we do find the recognition of the responsibility of the king to his subjects, and of the existence and exercise of popular rights. When we have considered the morals and religion, as we have now the polities of the heroic age, we shall be able

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to see how the three in the earliest times are connected together, and learn that, in the formative process as well as the subsequent development of civilization, religion, morality, and freedom go hand in hand.*

We proceed now to a consideration of the morals of the heroic age, and shall endeavor to generalize the details in this respect, as they are presented in the poems of Homer. Mr. Grote and Mr. Gladstone are here found entirely at variance again, and the question can be decided only by an appeal to the poems themselves. Mr. Grote seems to hold that the Greeks of this age had no fixed rule of morals at all, and no other notion of morality than that which is founded upon force, interest, or expediency. Speaking of the words ἐσθλὸς, ἀγαθὸς, δίκαιος, he says: "These

* „Es iſt der charakteriſtiſche Standpunkt der Homeriſchen Ethik, daß die Sphären des Rechts, der Sittlichkeit und Religioſität, bei dem Dichter, durchaus noch nicht auseinander fallen, ſo daß der Menſch z. B. δίκαιος ſeyn konnte, ohne θεουδὴς zu ſeyn—ſondern in unentwickelter Einheit beyſammen ſind." (Nägelsbach, „Hom. Theol.," Abſchn. V., S. 23.)

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words signify the man of birth, wealth, influence, and daring, whose arm is strong to destroy or to protect, whatever may be the turn of his moral sentiments; while the opposite epithet, κακὸς, designates the poor, lowly, and weak; from whose dispositions, be they ever so virtuous, society has little either to hope or to fear." * If this is true, it strikes a terrible blow at the doctrine of a universal moral sense; for it represents a people, possessed of a language the most marvellous on earth for the facility with which it expresses abstract ideas, destitute of any words which have a moral signification. Those are called good who are strong and brave, whatever may be their moral character; and those bad who are poor, lowly, and weak, however virtuous may be their dispositions. We recoil with horror from such a representation of any people, and pronounce it to be grossly incorrect in reference to the heroic age of Greece. If Mr. Grote can point out one passage, and this Mr. Gladstone challenges him to do, where

* Grote, ii. p. 64.

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ἀγαθὸς is applied to what is morally bad, or κακὸς to what is morally good, then he may claim that his position is established, and nothing less than this will establish it. It is certainly probable, *à priori*, that any people, and especially a people with a highly developed language, will be possessed of moral ideas, and it requires something more than mere assertion to set that probability aside. If the poems of Homer do not indicate the prevalence of a high ethical tone in the heroic age, and the presence of moral ideas disconnected from notions of force, interest, and expediency, then it is impossible to rely with confidence upon any historical results. Mr. Gladstone has shown conclusively by citations from the poems that ἀγαθὸς and κακὸς are used at times with an exclusive moral signification, and at other times with a leaning toward moral associations, which is sufficient for the purposes of the argument; but he shows also that the word δίκαιος is never used except to signify a moral or religious idea,*

* Gladstone's Homer, ii. 423.

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and corresponds with the word righteous, which refers to the two great departments of duty as relating to man and to God.

In considering the morals of the heroic age, we should not of course expect to find a morality, either in theory or practice, at all comparable to that which exists in Christian lands. But if we took for our guide some of those views which are in vogue at the present day in reference to the progress of the race from barbarism to civilization, we should expect to find a very low state of morals—greatly inferior to that which afterward obtained in Greece. The truth is, however, as we shall presently see, that there was a great decline and corruption in respect to morals from the time of the heroic age to that of the final subjugation of Greece by the Roman power. And the morals of the heroic age will in some respects appear so remarkably pure, that we shall be driven to the supposition of causes other than those usually assigned, for the existence of a fact so different from what the

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common views on this subject would have led us to expect.

The two respects in which the morality of the heroic age was most defective are homicide and piracy. We freely admit that a strange insensibility prevailed in regard to these crimes. Mr. Gladstone, however, very justly remarks that this insensibility arose not from cruelty or avarice, but from an exaggerated estimate of personal valor, and admiration for bold and daring adventure. But our object does not require us to justify the views or the practice of the Greeks in this respect. We only claim that in the essential elements of morality the Greeks of the heroic age stood upon a higher ground, and breathed a purer atmosphere than those of subsequent ages.

When we examine the evidence presented in the Iliad and Odyssey as to the morality of the heroic age, we are struck at once with the high estimate which is placed upon truthfulness. Hypocrisy is regarded with contempt, and the words are expected to express the real

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feelings of the man. There is nothing of that subjection to appetite and passion which is characteristic of a low state of civilization. Gluttony is hardly known, and drunkenness, which is so prominent a characteristic of other heroic ages, is never ascribed to the heroes of Homer. There are no human sacrifices. There is no case of cannibalism. There is no exposure of infants, which was afterward so frequently practised and justified. Slavery was mild and genial, and altogether different from what it afterward became in the progress of civilization. There were no gladiators. There was a peculiar tenderness and strength of attachment between members of the same family. This is shown in the history of Agamemnon and Menelaus, Ajax and Teucer, Glaucus and Sarpedon, and of the mother of Ulysses, who died of a broken heart at the absence of her son. The position of woman, as Mr. Grote himself admits, was higher than in what he calls historical Greece. The relation between the sexes seems to have been one of freedom, and at the same time of great

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delicacy, as is shown in the beautiful story of Nausicaä in the Odyssey. There are no unnatural vices, and their names even are unknown. There is no organized system of unchastity. In these respects the contrast with Mr. Grote's "Historical Greece" is most striking and favorable. The theory and practice in reference to marriage were that it should be the relation of one man to one woman, that it should be freely and spontaneously formed, and that the tie should be absolutely indissoluble. On this point the Greeks held higher ideas than some which are very prevalent at the present day. The case of Penelope, who for the twenty years of Ulysses' absence, still regarded herself as bound to him; and of Menelaus, who treated the tie between himself and Helen as indissoluble, indicate a very elevated view of the marriage relation. There is much of violence, very much which is inconsistent with strict morality, in the manners of the heroic age; but at the same time there is a generosity, a tenderness, a delicacy, a childlike simplicity,

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a warmth and refinement of friendship, and a domestic faithfulness which excite at once our wonder and admiration.

It is remarkable, also, what purity and delicacy Homer almost invariably observes, and how incomparably superior he is, in this respect, to the Greek tragedians, to Aristophanes, to Virgil, and to Horace. Even the apparent exceptions to this statement are susceptible of an easy explanation. Homer never attempted to degrade virtue, or to make vice attractive, and though he was the earliest of ancient authors, he is almost the only one of whom this can truthfully be said. Now this, we claim, is making out a very strong case for the morality of the Homeric age. It establishes most conclusively a vast superiority to the morality of succeeding ages; and when we find it closely allied with religion, with prayer, and with the discharge of duties toward the gods, it appears still more remarkable and admirable.

In comparing the morality of the heroic age with that of subsequent times, we notice

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both a progress and a decline. What may be called public morality attained afterward a higher standard, but private morality fell immeasurably below that of the heroic age. This point is well worthy of consideration. It shows us that, for some reason, that morality which stands nearest, as it were, to religion, lost its hold upon the hearts and lives of men, and at the same time, as civilization advanced, that morality which depends upon interest or worldly expediency, and which comes within the sphere of civil law, advanced also. For a time civilization without religion or religious morality was able to maintain the principles of society; but its foundations were undermined, and it lay at last a hopeless wreck, until it was rebuilt upon the enduring basis of Christianity.

We are compelled, therefore, to recognize the higher position of that age, in which religion lent its sanction to morality, and from which a marvellous civilization sprang forth, which had its roots deep in the reverence and purity of the past, and grew from that genial

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soil to gigantic size and strength; but fell at last because it could derive no life from an atmosphere which had become hopelessly impure and corrupt.

But it is time for us to turn our attention to the religion of the heroic age of Greece.

The faith of men in supernatural power was, in that age, peculiarly strong. Every unusual manifestation in nature and even many ordinary phenomena were attributed to supernatural agency; and there was not merely this recognition of the existence of a power higher than nature, but there was also a very clear conception of a moral government of the world, in accordance with which the good were to be rewarded and the evil punished. The views of the future life which are presented in these poems are indeed somewhat vague and indistinct; but, as Mr. Gladstone says, their want of logical coherence indicates that they "can not be referred to any one generative idea or system, but may be distorted copies or misunderstood portions of

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primitive truth." * There are, however, clearly presented three departments of the invisible world—Elysium, Hades, and Tartarus. While there is considerable confusion in regard to the respective character and functions of these receptacles of the departed, still it is evident that the moral government of the world is conceived of as projected into these unseen realms, and accordingly vice is there punished and virtue rewarded. At all events, the Homeric representation of the other world is greatly in advance of the utterly unsubstantial and morally ineffective conceptions of later times, as shown in the Ethics of Aristotle † or the Electra of Sophocles,‡ or in fact in almost all the poetry and philosophy of antiquity.

An examination of the religious system of Homer will satisfy us that so far from its being homogeneous, there are in it irreconcilable elements, which can not be blended harmoniously together. These different ele-

* II. 167. † Nich. Eth. iv. 10.
‡ Soph. Electr. 348.

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ments Mr. Gladstone supposes to be referrible to different origins: that, on the one hand, they are due to the formative mythological process which was already going on; and, on the other, had been handed down from the great primeval revelation. Those who receive the declaration of the Scriptures, that there was such a revelation, will not think it strange that fragments of it were still floating on the sea of time in the age of Homer; and those who do not believe in such a primitive revelation will find it exceedingly difficult to account for some very remarkable peculiarities, which we are about to consider, in the religion of the early Greeks. We claim that there is no explanation of these anomalies except on the supposition of a primitive revelation.

That this religious system is a composite and not a simple one is evident upon a very slight examination. The various parts of it do not fit harmoniously together, and refuse to come into any logical order, even under the operation of the Greek mind, which was the most logical that the world has ever

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known. There is on the one hand great dignity and purity; on the other, much that is gross and corrupt. The various deities have not their respective spheres of operation clearly defined, as would have been the case if the system had been one of pure invention. It is evident that the process of invention is at work upon pre-existing materials. Now the question is, what are these materials? How can we distinguish them from what is merely inventive? Is there any way by which we can link them with the truths of the primitive revelation, and thus furnish new evidence of such a revelation and of the great facts with which it is connected?

Mr. Gladstone calls these two elements in the religious system of Homer the traditive and the inventive. In attempting to separate the one from the other, we shall build our argument upon facts which he principally has furnished.

The first step in the argument starts from the fact of the mixed character of the population of Greece in the heroic age. This popu-

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lation was composed, in the first place, of Pelasgic tribes, who were probably the first settlers in the land, and then of Hellenic tribes, who had subsequently taken possession, and in the time of Homer were rapidly absorbing the Pelasgian element. These Pelasgi were very widely scattered. They were the primitive inhabitants, in all probability, of Italy and Greece,* and were settled for centuries before the Trojan war throughout the western and southern parts of Asia Minor. Now whatever portion of the religion of the Homeric age is found to be both Pelasgian and Hellenic may safely be regarded as springing from a more ancient origin than that which is Hellenic alone. The Hellenic mind, we know, was peculiarly inventive and imaginative, and the Pelasgian comparatively unpoetical and dull. The mythology of Greece, therefore, which is not Pelasgic, may well be regarded as an Hellenic invention; while that which is both Pelasgic and Hellenic must

* Niebuhr, Hist. Rome, i. 52.

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have been handed down among the tribes of each, we may well suppose, from some remote period when they were united together. The deities which are *peculiarly* Hellenic are Juno, Persephone, and Pluto. Those which are *peculiarly* Pelasgian are Demeter and Venus. Then we have Mercury, Vulcan, Bacchus, Paieon, and Ἥλιος, the sun, naturalized among the Greeks during the age of Homer. But besides these, there is a cluster of deities worshipped both by the Hellenes and the Pelasgi, including Jupiter, Minerva, Apollo, Latona, Diana, and perhaps Neptune. We have abundant evidence that the first three of these were deities whose worship was universal and of immemorial antiquity.

It is an exceedingly interesting inquiry, and one very fruitful in valuable results, in what respect these ancient deities, whose origin is hidden in the oblivion of the past, differed from those of modern invention and of merely local respect and worship? The Pelasgian deities were received by the Hellenic tribes

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and easily accommodated to the Hellenic system. Other deities of various origins were also admitted within the Olympian court. But Jupiter, Apollo, and Minerva are in the system by universal consent, with rights and powers and functions to which no origin can be assigned, and are so plainly and unmistakably distinguished from the rest, in so many and such decided respects, that we are compelled to regard them as anterior to the system, and admitted into it because they were so linked in with the religious ideas of men that it was impossible for them to be excluded.

It must be remembered that in subsequent times this heterogeneous character of Grecian Mythology scarcely appears. The inventive process has finally overmastered the traditional, and these universal deities have lost their divine attributes, and have become almost entirely human in their character and relations. But in Homer's time the inventive, humanizing process had scarcely begun to work upon them, except in the case of Jupiter. The traditional features in the cha-

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racter of Jupiter had already, in a great measure, given place to the character ascribed to him by the inventive mythology. But Apollo and Minerva stand forth alone, scarcely touched as yet with the taint of the humanizing process; and so conspicuous and grand in their supernatural attributes, so immeasurably superior to the other divinities with whom they are associated, that we are compelled to ascribe them not only to a different but a higher origin than the invention of man.

It can hardly be necessary to refer to the arguments by which it is shown that Jupiter is one of the names by which the Supreme Being was known in the East, before the migration of the Pelasgic and Hellenic tribes. The Egyptian, the Hindo, the Persian, the Grecian mythology all furnish evidence of what may be called monotheism with polytheistic tendencies.* We nowhere get back to pure monotheism: but monotheistic ideas are universally present, and the farther back we

* Döllinger, „Heidenthum und Judenthum".

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go, the more numerous and distinct do these ideas become. In the Grecian mythology, Jupiter was the embodiment of those ideas of omnipotence and of a providential government,* which had survived the polytheism and corruption which were fast destroying all the vestiges of primeval truth.

But we wish to consider more particularly the view which Mr. Gladstone takes of the traditional deities, Apollo and Minerva. These he regards as unquestionably referrible to the great primitive revelation of the Messiah. In order to establish this conclusion, he examines most minutely the character and functions of each of these divinities.

There is certainly something very remarkable in the representation of these two divinities in the poems of Homer. They seem to resist the attempts which the genius of the Hellenic race had made to reduce them to harmony with the Olympian court. They are vastly superior to the other deities; in many

* Rawlinson's Herodotus, i. 608.

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respects superior to Jupiter himself, for Jupiter had been already humanized by mythological invention. Apollo and Minerva were the only divinities to whom temples had been reared in the time of Homer. Prayers were offered to no other divinities with the exception of Jupiter.* These three deities alone received universal worship. The finest passages in the Iliad and Odyssey are those in which the poet, with all the wealth of his genius, describes the splendor of their persons, and the majesty with which they moved from place to place. Unlike the other gods, they are independent of wings or chariots. In their journeys there are no progressive steps. They are at once begun and ended.

Müller in his Dorians has given us a comprehensive statement of the ancient conception of Apollo. He says: "The Supreme Deity, when connected with Apollo, was neither born nor visible on earth, and perhaps never consi-

* Diana, to whom prayers are offered, we shall presently see does not really form an exception to this statement.

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dered as having any immediate influence upon men. But Apollo, who is often emphatically called the Son of Jupiter, acts as his intercessor, ambassador, and prophet with mankind. And whilst the Father of the gods appears indistinct and at a distance, dwelling in ether, and enthroned in the highest heavens, Apollo is described as a divine hero, whose office is to ward off evils and dangers, establish rites of expiation, and announce the ordinances of fate."

The originally pure and spotless character of Apollo had already been slightly touched with the taint of sensuality. But yet it is a striking fact that there was a latent consciousness that this was totally inconsistent with his other attributes; for while he was subjected to the humanizing process, and conceived of as actuated by the evil passions of our nature, a relief was found from the evident incongruity by the conception of Diana, who was represented as his sister, and whose principal attribute was chastity. These two deities actually represent one single idea, originally

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embodied in Apollo alone; but divided so as to be more readily comprehended. There are certain offices in respect to which they may be considered as representing one divinity.

Nothing is more remarkable in the Iliad and Odyssey than the relation of Apollo and Diana to death, and nothing in these deities more strikingly harmonizes with the traditionary idea of the Messiah. They alone are able to occasion death without the instrumentality of second causes, and they alone have the power of producing painless death. When Hector had been killed and dragged around the walls of the city, and afterward, by preternatural agency, his body had been made whole, Hecuba says: "But now thou liest, to my sorrow, in the palaces, fresh and lately slain, like him whom silver-bowed Apollo, attacking, has slain with his mild weapons." Eumæus tells Ulysses of a certain island where, "when the men grow old, silver-bowed Apollo, coming with Diana, and attacking them with his mild weapons, slays them." Penelope, awaking from sleep, exclaims: "Truly

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a very soft slumber has covered me, who suffer grievous things: would that chaste Diana would now immediately give me as soft a death." These touching passages show how endearing was the relation supposed to exist between Apollo and mankind. He was the deliverer, the prophet, the god of expiation, the conqueror of death. We see something of the beauty and grandeur of this conception in the majestic benignity of the Apollo di Belvidere. But it stands evidently on too high a ground for mere human invention; it comes too near the office of the Divine Man, whose advent was promised from the beginning of the world; and when we read of the glorious attributes of Apollo, we know that they but dimly reflect the radiant vision of the coming Messiah, who "through death should destroy him that hath the power of death."

Friedreich says: "The triad of Jupiter, Apollo, and Minerva bears an unmistakable analogy to the Christian Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost;" * but Mr. Gladstone's view is ma-

* Die Realien in der Iliad und Odyssee.

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nifestly more in accordance with the facts in the case. Minerva, according to this view, represented one aspect of the Messianic tradition, as Apollo did another. The fact that Minerva held originally, and maintained, in spite of all the corruptions of the heathen world, a character unrivalled for dignity and purity, is indisputable. The highest honors were paid to her, and there was no divinity superior to hers. Her identity with Isis and Neith, the Egyptian deities, has been fully established, and these were considered supremely divine, for the inscription to Isis at Capua reads:

TIBI.
VNA. QUÆ.
ES OMNIA.
DEA. ISIS.*

And in the temple of Sais it was written in hieroglyphics of the goddess Neith or Minerva: "I am all that was, is, and shall be, and my veil no mortal can remove." † The prin-

* Cudworth's Intellectual System of the Universe, i. 466.
† Ib. i. 457.

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cipal attribute of this goddess was wisdom, and she is represented as springing from the head of Jove. The idea of ordinary generation seems entirely inadmissible in reference to her. It can not fail to strike every one what a counterpart this conception of Minerva is to the "Wisdom" of the Jews, which represented the divine side of the Messiah's person, and was identical with, and reproduced in the Logos, or Word of St. John. The original Messianic tradition must, of course, have had a double aspect, as the Messiah was contemplated in His divine nature alone, or in His incarnation. The tradition of the Messiah as the incarnate God had at last, in the heathen world, taken the form of Apollo; that of the Wisdom, or Logos, or Word, which before it was made flesh was with God, and was God, had taken the form of Minerva, and through these forms the most glorious truth ever made known still retained some hold upon the minds of men.

But it is necessary, in order to establish these points more perfectly, to ascertain how

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these Messianic traditions and these remnants of a great primeval revelation could have found their way into Greece. If we can gain any light on this subject, it would help to corroborate, by the results of secular investigation, the great truths which we desire to prove. This will lead us to a brief consideration of the origin of the inhabitants of Greece, and of the various migrations by which the country was settled. There were in the heroic age, as we have seen, two classes of inhabitants in Greece—the Pelasgian and the Hellenic. It is clear, and admitted by all the best philologists and ethnologists, that they both belong to the same race, but came into Greece at widely separated times; the Pelasgi, eighteen hundred or two thousand years B.C., the Hellenes from thirteen hundred to fifteen hundred years B.C. The derivation of the Hellenic tribes from the East is clearly evident, and there seems to be good reason for tracing them to Persia. This alone would lead us to the conclusion that the Pelasgi, being of the same race, were of Eastern origin also; but

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there is other and conclusive evidence of this. There are indications, before what are regarded as historical times, of three great migrations from the East. In the earliest times we find the Turanian race overspreading Western Asia and Northern and Central Europe. Then we have another wave of migration in the great Indo-European race, which, it is probable, was developed out of the Turanian race, and which seems to have spread in two directions, at least, pressing upon its Turanian predecessors. One stream seems to have flowed into Northern, and the other into Central and Southern Europe, through Asia Minor. In this migration the Pelasgi are to be found, who were probably the first settlers in Italy and Greece. There is no little reason for supposing that the point from which these migrations proceeded was Central Asia, and near the Hindoo Koosh. The names applied by the Pelasgic tribes to mountains and rivers and cities, wherever they settled, all point back to just this quarter of the world. Previous to the fifteenth century before our era,

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the Aryan branch of the Indo-European race was settled on the Upper Indus, and a great migration eastward and westward took place. The one is commemorated in the Rig Veda, the other in the Zendavesta. If the Hellenes are of Persian origin, as there seems good reason to suppose, they are to be referred to this migration. We have not considered the development of the Semitic family, for that did not contribute especially to the population of Greece. All the evidence that is accessible on this point is favorable to this conclusion: that the Pelasgi and the Hellenes were of one race; that they were of Eastern origin; that that part of their religious system which was common to both and peculiar to neither was of immemorial antiquity, and came, as it were, from the very source of the race. Now this part of their system is just that which is so immeasurably superior to the other, and has such striking points of similarity to the Jewish traditions of the Messiah. That these facts point back to an expectation, prevailing in the earliest ages of the world, of the future

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coming of a divine person in a human form, who should be a Deliverer from evil and a Conqueror of death, and that this expectation gave its character and direction to a vast deal of heathen mythology, we hold to be among those things which it is folly to deny.

We have merely glanced at this subject, and have not even referred to an immense body of evidence, in regard to it, to be found in Homer alone. Much may also be found apparently inconsistent with these views, but the facts still remain to be accounted for, if that is possible, on any more reasonable hypothesis.

But to conclude, we find the poems of Homer just at a time when we can best catch from them, as it were, the direction of human history. A process of corruption in religion and morals is evidently going on, but some of the great truths of the traditional religion are still clear and distinct, and exercise a powerful influence over the morals of the age. A civilization has arisen which has received such vitality, under favoring circumstances, from

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these great fundamental principles of society, that its development goes on, while both religion and morality decline, until, at last, cut off from the sources of its life, it is well nigh extinct when it is restored by Christianity. The progress from Homer in religion and religious morals being downward, and speculative religion being first in the form of Polytheism, with clear evidences of a prior belief in One God, and then Polytheism in which all traces of Monotheism have disappeared, and then Atheism, there is no foundation for the order of religious development, advocated by Hume,* Comte,† and in this country by Theodore Parker,‡ according to which Fetichism comes first, Polytheism next, and Monotheism last. The poems of Homer, in connection with subsequent history, show that Monotheism is the first form of religion, and all other religions are a corruption from that. They furnish us with evidence also, that the foundations of civilization are laid in religion,

* Natural History of Religion. † Philosophie Positive.
‡ Discourses on Religion.

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morality, and the recognition of popular rights. They show us that in the progress of civilization, the highest stage in that which is most nearly connected with man's dignity and happiness is when religion and morality are conceived of as only different aspects of the same thing. We find in these poems, at that early time, the presence of moral ideas, practically influential in a far greater degree than was afterward the case. A higher ethical tone prevails, and as a subsequent accumulation of experience was accompanied by a lower order of moral conceptions, we are led to reject the materialistic notion of the development of moral ideas from force or custom or expediency. We find the presence of a traditional religion pointing back to the great primeval revelation, and in its counterparts of the Messianic traditions pointing forward to CHRIST as the centre and only explanation of the history of the world.

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THE

SUSPENSE AND RESTORATION OF FAITH.*

In our consideration of the pamphlets, the titles of which we have placed below, we wish to disclaim, at the outset, any association of the names of Mr. Theodore Parker and Dr. Bellows which would imply that we regard them as standing upon the same platform, or as subject to the same ten-

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* THEODORE PARKER'S *Experience as a Minister, with some Account of his Early Life and Education for the Ministry.* Boston: Rufus Leighton, Jr. 1859.

The Suspense of Faith. An Address to the Alumni of the Divinity School of Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass. Given July 19th, 1859, by HENRY W. BELLOWS. New-York: C. S. Francis & Co., 554 Broadway. 1859.

A Sequel to "The Suspense of Faith." By HENRY W. BELLOWS, D.D. New-York: D. Appleton & Co., 346 and 348 Broadway. 1859.

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dencies. We consider them as widely differing, both in opinions and method; and as logically bound to pursue directly opposite results. We have associated them together only because the avowals and confident boasting of the one and the admissions and honest apprehensions of the other, furnish most remarkable confirmation of the views which we hold of a great movement in the religious world.

In order, if possible, to present these views clearly, we wish to draw attention to the fact, which we hope, as we proceed, to make evident, that there are in the Protestant world two schools, broadly distinguished from each other in their general characteristics, although neither is represented exclusively by any one organization, and each passes, by almost imperceptible gradations, into the other. For the want of better appellations we shall call one of these schools the historic and evangelical, the other the rationalistic. The most prominent points of difference between these schools grow out of the different views which

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are taken of revelation and of reason as sources of religious truth. With the one school revelation, and with the other reason, is the paramount authority. We admit that there is much of the rationalistic spirit in the historic and evangelical school, and something perhaps of the historic and evangelical spirit in the rationalistic school; but the prevalence of either spirit determines the school to which it belongs; and into these two schools may be divided the whole of the Protestant world.

The historic and evangelical school, notwithstanding its many differences, possesses certain common characteristics. A divine revelation is recognized as of supreme authority. The great truths contained in that revelation are those which declare the need of man, through his natural alienation from God, of a supernatural redemption; and the provisions for that redemption in the incarnation, sufferings, and death of Jesus Christ, and the regenerating and sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit.

This school also preserves the historic element by retaining, in a greater or less de-

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gree, the historic character of the Christian Church.

The rationalistic school, on the other hand, is characterized by the practical, if not avowed, supremacy of reason over revelation. Its method is to approach all religious subjects as if they were to be considered for the first time; and to reject, as authoritative, not only the traditions of the Christian Church, but any portions of the Bible itself which are thought to be in conflict with the moral sense or intellectual convictions of man. The doctrinal system of this school denies any natural alienation of man from God; and its remedy for the sins and sorrows of the world is not the acceptance of a supernatural redemption, but a process of self-culture.

It is true, indeed, that a rationalistic method may lead to evangelical results. Beyond a question, evangelical truth can be defended and maintained on the ground of pure reason. But those who arrive, even by the rationalistic method, at evangelical results, in most cases disown the method,

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acknowledge the supremacy of the Word of God over reason; and so cease to belong to the rationalistic school.

This rationalistic school, including, as it does, all those who, in whatever degree, consciously or unconsciously elevate reason above the Word of God, is principally represented, within the pale of nominal Christianity, by the denomination of Unitarians, or, to use a name which they perhaps prefer, Liberal Christians. We know that it will appear harsh to many in that ecclesiastical connection to charge them with rationalism. We certainly do not charge such persons with rationalism, in the odious sense in which the word is usually understood; but we are compelled to express our conviction that the method by which men have been drawn away from the great truths of historic Christianity is rationalistic; that it leads, logically and necessarily, to avowed rationalism, to the rejection of a part, and finally of the whole, of the Bible, and to the abandonment of the Church. This Mr. Parker boldly declares to be the result

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with him. And Dr. Bellows admits, with alarm, that the Unitarian body is approaching this consummation of its development. And let it be remembered that neither has Mr. Parker reached, nor Dr. Bellows foreseen, the final goal of this rationalistic course; for the only logical terminus of this progress is in the doctrine of the fool, "who hath said, in his heart, there is no God!"

We do not care to spend much time upon the style and manner of Mr. Theodore Parker's Letter. It comes from him under circumstances which would effectually repress our indignation, were we disposed to cherish it. One who is afar from home, in a foreign land, suffering under a fatal malady, with the realities of eternity drawing very near to him, is entitled to sympathy and kindness, whatever may be our disapprobation of his temper or abhorrence of his opinions. We shall not, therefore, refer to several passages which we had marked, and which we are sure that even he, in his better moments, would admit to be unfair representations of the views to which

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he is opposed. We are compelled to say, however, for so much the interests of the truth demand, that Mr. Parker caricatures evangelical doctrine, and then ridicules the creature of his own imagination.

What we are interested, however, to do is to draw attention to the position which Mr. Parker has come finally to occupy; and which has a peculiar significance for us, since it is, in our view, a logical result of the principles of rationalistic Christianity. This result is startling enough. Mr. Parker, like Mephistopheles, is the great denier. Man's need of Redemption is denied. The fact of a supernatural redemption is denied. Miracles are denied. A divine revelation and the supreme authority of the Bible are denied. The Trinity in Unity is denied. Regeneration and sanctification by the Holy Spirit are denied. The atonement is denied; and the claims of Jesus to be even an infallible teacher are unequivocally denied. It is an abuse of language to call such a system Christian. If there is any significance in words, it is Deism. There

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is no truth peculiar to the historic Christianity of all ages which this one man, on the authority of his own reason, has not ruthlessly trampled under foot and swept contemptuously away.

This sort of daring, we know, excites the admiration of many persons. We confess that it has no charms for us. We can not dignify with the name of courage that recklessness which would lead a man to venture out upon a rope over the boiling floods and raging abyss of Niagara; and the exploit of madly tilting against the faith of all ages of the Christian Church is, in our view, as little entitled to the praise of true courage, especially as it may now be performed without the slightest danger of martyrdom.

We have read Dr. Bellows with very different feelings. Fairness, honesty, and earnestness are very prominent characteristics of his mind. We doubt whether any man has ever made so many admissions unfavorable to a cause to which he still adheres. And this he has done, not through want of skill, but

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simply, as it would appear, because he loves the truth. The *Sequel to the Suspense of Faith* strikes us more favorably, in this respect, than the original Address. Indeed, we can not but regard it as in every respect superior. There is a vast deal of earnest thought and profound philosophy in this pamphlet, and they are clothed in a rich and glowing, though sometimes indistinct and cloudy, style. He admits most distinctly that Unitarianism must now follow the lead of Mr. Parker into Infidelity, or retrace its steps; that there is great "despondency, self-questioning, and anxiety" in the denomination. He says that "the moment we find ourselves in possession of men, whom genius, character, and scholarship fit to lead us on in our logical career to new victories and the extension of our faith, they almost uniformly become paralyzed by doubts and scruples, and lose their interest in the progress they might assure." He says, again, "To speak of Unitarianism independently of Trinitarianism, conveys no correct and no valuable idea: and the purely

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denominational theology of the body has no worth in the decline of the errors or extravagance it was born to balance and compensate."

He gives a representation which would be appalling, were it really sustained by facts, of what he calls the suspense of faith. In his opinion, the whole Protestant world is chargeable, though in a less degree, with the same tendencies which prevail in the Unitarian denomination; and the logical goal of this progress—for we can not understand him otherwise—is open and avowed infidelity. From such a consummation he recoils, and denounces, in several passages of extraordinary ability, the rationalism and individualism of the age which are leading to such a result. He has arrived—and we think it a remarkable achievement, considering his point of departure—at some very clear conceptions, most nobly expressed, of Church life and the importance of historic Christianity.

It is impossible for Dr. Bellows to escape altogether the embarrassment arising from the inconsistency of his views with his posi-

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tion. Whenever he strives to reconcile the two, he seems to us obliged to use words in a sense wholly at variance with their true signification. Dr. Bellows is usually exceedingly intelligible; but when he strives to harmonize a Unitarian position with an acceptance of historic Christianity, he is led into statements which mean nothing unless the signification of the words employed is utterly and entirely changed. What meaning, for instance, can possibly be attached to such statements as these, if the words are used in any sense which they have been accustomed to bear? "I thoroughly believe that the Trinitarian theology of the historic Church, outworn and embarrassing now, was helpful, because relatively true to the times in which it arose; and that the ideas which lay in the minds of the authors of the Athanasian and Nicene Creeds were essential ideas; but ideas which, if they add any thing to a devout and scriptural Unitarianism (which is doubtful), contradict nothing in it!" "An evangelical Unitarianism is the most Scriptural Trinitarianism

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extant!" This language shows conclusively, in our opinion, that Dr. Bellows can not resist the conviction that the testimony of the historic Church is in favor of Trinitarian and evangelical theology. But the attempt to reconcile this conviction with any possible Unitarian ground is utterly and forever hopeless.

The fact is, that a permanent system on the old Unitarian basis has become impossible. It is subject to two opposite attractions, and to one or the other it must yield. It must lapse into Infidelity, or return into the bosom of historic Christianity. We hold that there is eventually no escape from one or the other result, and any attempt at compromise is an attempt to harmonize things in their very nature irreconcilable.

We can not sympathize, even in its qualified form, with the satisfaction of Dr. Bellows in a movement which has led to such results. We could admit that this rationalistic movement has had in some respects a salutary effect. It has undoubtedly softened the harsh and repulsive features of a theology against

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which it was a natural protest. It is certain that it has proclaimed many noble truths about which historic Christianity has of late been silent. But how can we regard a movement otherwise than with profound sadness and disapprobation which has unsettled the religious convictions of men only to lead them into spiritual doubt and alarm, and has been the means of producing, in the degree in which it exists, that very suspense of faith which has furnished Dr. Bellows with the theme of his discourse?

To this question of the existence of a suspense of faith throughout Protestantism, we wish to ask the special attention of our readers. If there is really such a pause in the faith of the Protestant world as Dr. Bellows seems to imagine, and we are all really on the brink of a denial and rejection of all that we have heretofore regarded as Christian truth, we are in a most pitiable and wretched position. But, to our mind, the age in which we live is characterized by a restoration rather than a suspense of faith. This we propose to

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establish by reference to some of the most remarkable facts and movements of our times.

In order to appreciate more fully the restoration of faith, in the present age, we must glance for a moment at the state of things, in this respect, which has passed away. The eighteenth century was one of almost universal skepticism. The influence of Hobbes and Hume had alienated the philosophy of England from the Gospel. In Germany, the way was prepared, by Goethe especially, for the naturalism of Paulus, the assault of Strauss upon the credibility of the New Testament, and the dreary pantheism of Hegel. In France, materialism was carried to its most frightful consequences by Condillac. Rousseau substituted sentiment for religion, and Voltaire, with the hatred of a demon for Jesus Christ, blasphemously called upon the genius and the learning of the world to help him "crush the wretch."

This literary and philosophical apostasy had its results, not only in the entire alienation of vast numbers from Christianity, but also in

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the perversion of the Gospel. Where there was not open and avowed infidelity or secret unbelief, there was a vague and empty system of religion scarcely superior to the mere religion of nature. Evangelical religion was well-nigh extirpated in France. In Germany, but few here and there proclaimed the truths of the Gospel. In England, as Mr. Wilberforce says, "Preaching had degenerated into mere dry and barren ethics." In this country, a natural reaction from the hard and metaphysical Calvinism in which alone the Gospel was presented, fell in with the skeptical tendency of the age, and evangelical religion was in the most imminent danger of extinction. There was a time when even the avowal of evangelical sentiments required no little moral courage.

That there has been a prodigious change in this respect no one can doubt for a moment. It is wonderful that it should have escaped the notice of Dr. Bellows, or, if noticed by him, that it should not have modified his whole view of the present "suspense of faith."

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We do not deny, indeed, that there is still a lamentable and widely-diffused want of faith in the fundamental facts of Christianity, and that very much of the literature and science of the age is hostile to religion. The question between Dr. Bellows and us would be, in the first place, one of degrees; but we should differ from him entirely as to that element which is most prominent and powerful in the Protestant world. Nobody understands better than Dr. Bellows that there is an historic Christianity. This historic Christianity, we claim, exists to-day; and exists with constantly increasing power and influence. We claim that it is now what it has been essentially in all ages, and that it is always consistent with itself, thus affording a splendid illustration of the words of Horace:

"Servetur ad imum
Qualis ab incepto processerit, et sibi constet."

In order to estimate the position and influence of evangelical Christianity, which is identical, as we have described it, in its grand fea-

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tures, with historic Christianity, we should naturally consider it first in its relations with the Philosophy of the age.

In this respect some most remarkable results have been attained. Undoubtedly the metaphysician who has exercised the most decided influence upon the age is Immanuel Kant. His principal work, the Kritik reiner Vernunft, is an investigation as to the nature and capacity of the human faculties, and the kind and degree of knowledge which is possible to man. Sir William Hamilton, who, in the most important particulars, is the logical successor of Kant, has transferred the fundamental principles of the Kantian philosophy into the common-sense philosophy of Scotland, and continued the investigations of Kant in the same direction. The result of this inquiry, prosecuted by one of the most subtle metaphysicians the world has ever seen, is that our faculties are so limited that we can neither affirm nor deny in reference to the absolute and the infinite, and that our knowledge is hemmed in between contradictory

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extremes, both of which are inconceivable, and yet one of which must be true. This principle can be illustrated by a reference to the doctrine that the universe began to exist. This doctrine is evidently inconceivable, but so also is the contradictory doctrine that the universe did not begin to exist; and yet, by a necessary law of thought, one or the other must be regarded as true.

Mr. Mansel, in his *Limits of Religious Thought* has applied this philosophy to the doctrines of revealed religion, and has furnished materials, it seems to us, for a most powerful argument in behalf of evangelical truth.

The Hamiltonian Philosophy has demonstrated that there are certain things which are inconceivable which nevertheless must be true. The conceivable, therefore, has ceased to be the limit of the true. This destroys at once the whole class of objections against the doctrines of evangelical religion, on the ground that they are inconceivable, and leaves us to

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accept or reject them, according as they are supported or not by appropriate evidence.

The next position which it enables us to take is this: If it is impossible for the human faculties to reach the infinite, inasmuch as the infinite is inconceivable, all systems of religion which rest upon human speculation are baseless. It is an utterly abortive attempt for the mind, in the exercise of its own powers, to affirm or deny any thing in reference to the infinite. This principle sweeps away all those systems of religion which claim to be pre-eminently rational. It is true that evangelical religion is placed, in this respect, upon the same level with every other system; but the advantage which evangelical religion derives is that, although it is left without defence, on the ground of human reason, it is also secured against attack. The field of discussion is thus very much narrowed. The controversy between those who hold evangelical views and those who do not, must turn upon the interpretation of the Scriptures. If this philosophy is true, we come clearly and

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inevitably to this result, that so far as certainty in reference to our relations to God is concerned, the Scriptures are not merely our chief but our only guide.

If the appeal then is made to the Scriptures, there is one fact which is most significant as to the result. It can not be disputed that the evangelical system is the only one which has ever been willing to rest its claims exclusively upon the Word of God. No matter in which direction men have wandered from evangelical truth, they have always wandered from the Bible also. Not merely, let it be understood, from the evangelical interpretation of the Bible, but from the authority of the Bible itself. On the one hand they have placed Reason, and on the other the Church above the Bible. They have added to or they have taken from the Word of God. So that it has become perfectly clear that evangelical religion alone is in harmony with the Bible just as it is. If any other system is adopted, the decrees of the Church must be taken as equal in authority with the Bible; or a Bible

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must be had from which every thing inconsistent with the system has been expunged; or a divine revelation must be given up altogether.

It will be seen that it is not necessary for the purposes of our argument that this philosophy in all its details should be regarded as true. We may hold that there is such a thing as an intuitive knowledge of the infinite, and that a science of theology is possible; but that with which we are now concerned is the fact that the most influential philosophy of the age, that which will soon give the prevailing tone to the thinking of our times, if logically carried out, compels us to choose between evangelical religion and universal skepticism.

But besides this, a Restoration of Faith is, we think, foreshadowed in the fact that schemes of reform on the rationalistic basis have run themselves out to the most wicked or ridiculous consequences, so that the age finds itself baffled and cheated in that direction, and is beginning already to retrace its steps. The fact is, and it is more and more recognized, all social evils resolve themselves

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into one or another form of sin. The difference between true and false systems of reform is, that the former bring the agencies of Redemption to bear upon evil, while by the latter these agencies are discarded. Rationalistic systems of reform proceed upon the idea that social evils are the result of man's circumstances, and not of the corruption of his nature; and these systems, we maintain, are right, and must and should prevail, unless the Fall and Redemption, which are the fundamental principles of evangelical religion, are to be recognized as the fundamental principles also of social and political philosophy. It is well that we should understand that the rejection of evangelical religion leads necessarily to the wild and wicked schemes of reform which are the curse of the present day. Give up the idea of the Fall and of the native depravity of man, and you inevitably seek for the remedy for evil in the powers and tendencies with which man is endowed. If he is not naturally depraved, he needs no redemption which his own nature does not afford. And

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if it is in his own nature that the remedy is to be found, then that nature should be left to its own unrestricted development, for whatever is most free in it is most in accordance with true happiness. To what monstrous absurdities and unspeakable abominations has this rationalistic philosophy at last conducted us! The poet Shelley, in his "Notes to Queen Mab," has proposed the abolishing of animal food as a remedy for all the evils of humanity! Socialism or the destruction of property, and free love or the destruction of domestic ties, are the inevitable outgrowths of this philosophy. Our age has heard the infamous proposal of the emancipation of woman by the annihilation of the family; but the last and most characteristic insult of this godless rationalism to the moral sense of mankind is in a detestable work of M. Michelet, recently published. In this work, M. Michelet invades with unhallowed step the sanctities of domestic life, and erects a so-called safeguard for virtue and honor by putting a spiritualized physiology in the place of Christ!

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It is well that we have come at last near to the consummation of this development. As, in philosophy, we are learning that we must choose between religion and universal skepticism; so, in reference to questions of social and political reform, we must choose eventually between evangelical religion and the vilest radicalism.

If we have not lost all confidence in the age, can we doubt but that it will retrace its steps? The age is logical, and, therefore, it has carried out its Rationalism to these miserable results. But it has not abandoned utterly its faith. It still trusts in purity, in honor, in integrity, and love. It still recognizes the great principles of the moral government of God, and it will turn back and seek until it finds those grand principles of historic Christianity in which the great problems of society have their roots.

In this connection we can not but express our obligations to Dr. Bellows for the masterly manner in which he has shown that the true principles of reform are eminently con-

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servative. Some shallow thinkers of our times, who deem themselves wiser than all the generations of the past, are in the habit of denouncing conservatism as the great enemy of progress. Dr. Bellows tugs bravely at the foundations of this popular radicalism, and sweeps them triumphantly away. Nobly and eloquently has he declared that there are great facts and truths which are not open questions, but which have the testimony of that which is immeasurably above individual reason, the universal reason of the race. We must build upon the foundations of the past. All true progress must have its roots in institutions which already exist. This is the conservative idea of reform, but it is utterly in conflict with the popular rationalism of the age. The great advances of humanity have invariably been made upon this principle. The treasures of the past have been carried on into the future. The religious reformations of the world especially have always been accompanied by a return to the fundamental principles of historic religion. Jesus Christ,

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for we may speak reverently in such a connection of him, was the greatest and at the same time the most conservative of reformers. The roots of that system which he came to fulfill were interwoven through every generation of the world, and grasped firmly the great primeval facts and principles of our being.

But besides these indications of the course which earnest and thoughtful and devout minds must pursue, which is nothing less than a return to the principles of evangelical or historic Christianity, there are most striking indications of a revival already of evangelical life.

The most remarkable evidence of this is perhaps to be found in the history of Germany for the last thirty or forty years. There the great battle between Evangelical religion and Rationalism has been fought; and the forms of Rationalism which are now rife among us are those which have been driven out from the land of their birth. In 1817 the Third Centennial Anniversary of the Reformation was celebrated with the greatest enthu-

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siasm. New inquiry was stimulated as to the real principles of this great religious movement, and the faith of Luther was brought out in full contrast with the cold, negative Rationalism which then prevailed. The Evangelical Union was inaugurated in Prussia, which looked to a union of Lutheranism and Reform, and the consequent strengthening of both. It was evident that a new era had commenced. It was at this period that the extraordinary genius of Schleiermacher, whose universal scholarship had mastered seemingly all the philosophy and literature of the world, began its mighty influence over the German mind. With a theology far from orthodox, he still defended with unexampled ability and success the fundamental doctrines of sin and redemption. Schleiermacher has been followed in the same career by the profound historian Neander; by Tholuck and Olshausen, whose Commentaries on the New Testament are equalled only by the dissertations of Hengstenberg on the Old. Twesten and Nitzsch infused still more of evangelical

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life into the Schleiermachian theology, and Ullman and Dorner labored in the same cause with eminent success.

In the dark and stormy days of the revolutionary year 1848, the Kirchentag, with its *Inner Mission* for the Promotion of the Practical Interests of Christianity, was formed. Tholuck, Nitzsch, Müller, Hengstenberg, Dorner, Ullman, Hoffman, Ebrard, and Lange were the principal founders and defenders of this movement. Its annual meetings, in which great numbers of the first men in Germany have participated, have had a vast influence in the promotion of evangelical life and doctrine. Its department of the *Inner Mission*, especially under the fostering care of Dr. Wichern, has shown how beautifully works of charity spring forth from evangelical faith.

While it is certain that there is still a vast deal of Rationalism in Germany, it is certain also that its true tendencies have been so clearly exhibited that a most powerful reaction has taken place. A system which has found

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its goal in the atheism of Feuerbach, who says that man's idea of God is only, as it were, a double vision of himself, is no system for the naturally devout character of the German mind. The recoil from such results has already been tremendous. Hundreds of pulpits, which were formerly filled with Rationalistic preachers, are now occupied with men who proclaim with earnest enthusiasm the doctrines of the cross. The science of Germany is assuming more and more a position of harmony with religion. Evangelical truth has enthroned itself in the Universities, which were once withered and shrivelled with the blasts of Rationalism; and from these venerable seats of learning, through innumerable pastors and teachers, a healthful stream of saving truth is now flowing through every portion of the land. Rationalists in this country prate about the progress of the age as if it would inevitably favor their views; but in Germany, where Rationalism has had the fairest field, the progress of the age is fast outgrowing it, and the land of Luther begins

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to rejoice everywhere in the restoration of the light which was first shed upon it from the torch of the great Reformer.

No reflecting mind can fail to see in the wonderful revivals of religion which have prevailed so extensively within the last few years an evidence of a renewal of evangelical life. After every allowance has been made for exaggeration of statement, for the influences of sympathy and nervous excitement, for the stimulating effect of revival measures, and for the extravagance and excess by which they have been attended, the facts are still sufficiently remarkable to demand the earnest consideration of every thinking man. They show beyond a question that it is the evangelical system alone which stirs the heart of humanity, since it is that alone which stands in any adequate proportion to the conscious wants of the soul, or proposes any thing which is felt to be an adequate remedy. All the resources of Rationalism, employed with the highest skill and power, have never been able to call forth such a response from the human

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heart. It can not summon the deep affections, the profound powers of our nature to the aid of truth and holiness. The great truths of the Fall and the Redemption are the only ones which cause every chord of our being to vibrate, sweeping over them tumultuously at first, until they send forth wild and discordant wailings; and then sweetly and soothingly, until there rises from them one perpetual harmony of joy and peace.

But perhaps the most favorable indication in reference to the present condition and future prospects of evangelical Christianity is to be found in the tendency, which is rapidly developing itself, toward a union of the various bodies of evangelical Christians. There could hardly be a more auspicious sign than this, for the want of union among its adherents has been the weakness of the cause. In this respect we are following in the same course through which Germany has already passed. The first great victory over Rationalism was succeeded by discussions as to the nature of the Church, and projects for the

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union of all the sects of Protestant Germany. The decline of Rationalism among us, although in its first stages, is accompanied by renewed inquiry as to ecclesiastical differences, and an earnest and most unequivocally expressed desire for union among Christians. This is, it seems to us, the want of which Evangelical Protestantism is most conscious, and such a wide-spread consciousness as exists of this want is a great step toward its removal. Union is indeed to be desired only as it is accompanied by a universal reception of fundamental truth. This can be expected only as the result of that spirit of true charity which rejoiceth in the truth. And until this spirit universally prevails, even disunion itself contributes to the same end by assigning to different parties different phases of truth, so that by the combined action and reaction of all a far better system is attained than if any one had exclusively prevailed. But the dislike which now exists for theological strife, the depreciation of differences among Christians which is so frequently and openly ex-

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pressed, and the longing for union which in so many ways finds utterance, all seem to indicate the approach of the time when union can exist without any sacrifice of the truth, when indeed the cohesive forces of Evangelical Protestantism shall render a longer disunion utterly impossible.

It would be easy to show that recent discoveries in the physical sciences, and that philological, ethnological, and archæological investigations of late fall in harmoniously with a system of which evangelical principles are the basis. The limits of this article, however, will not allow more than a simple allusion to the fact, and to the contrast, in this respect, which the maturer results of science, in all its departments, exhibit to the crude and abortive attempts which were formerly made, to show an irreconcilable contradiction between reason and faith. If there is any significance whatever in the progress of science at the present day, it is, that the study of nature and an enlightened interpretation of the Scriptures lead to harmonious results.

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When we consider all this: the almost universal skepticism of the last century as compared with the present; the favorable aspect of the metaphysical philosophy of the age in its relations with revealed religion; the absurd and wicked consequences, which are fast exhibiting themselves, of rationalistic schemes of Reform; the wonderful awakening of evangelical life in Germany, the very cradle of modern Rationalism; the remarkable religious interest which has sprung up in this country in connection with evangelical doctrine, and has spread throughout this land, and across the seas to Scotland and Ireland; the intense longing for union which stirs tumultuously the heart of evangelical Christendom; the present position and influence of the sciences, the positive results of severe and long-continued investigation in God's revelation of himself in nature; when we consider all this, does it not seem marvelous that the Protestantism of this age should have been selected as *specially* characterized by a "suspense of faith"? We demand of any one at all acquainted with the

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history of this matter, whether this generation, as compared with those of the last century, is not characterized rather by a restoration of faith in the great truths of historic and evangelical religion? Those who speak of Protestantism as weak are looking at it only upon its rationalistic side, where it has shown itself powerless, indeed, except for evil. Historic and evangelical Protestantism is strong, in spite of its differences and divisions. Its differences and divisions grow not out of the weakness of the cause, but out of the very consciousness of its strength and safety under the severest examination. Charles de Remusat, a distinguished Romanist, has nobly said, in speaking of England in the *Revue des deux Mondes*, "*Si l'Angleterre produit tant de sectes, ce n'est pas parce qu'elle est protestant, c'est parce qu'elle est libre.*" And if even now, notwithstanding all these divisions, Protestantism exhibits such wonderful evidences of life and strength, what may we not expect if these longings and efforts for union in Germany, in France, in Switzerland,

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in England, in America are ever realized, and the few grand fundamental principles of the Universal Church are held and defended by a united Protestant world?

Dr. Bellows's pamphlets are, on the one hand, a protest against the tendencies of rationalistic Christianity toward the infidelity of Theodore Parker; and, on the other, an expression of strong desire for an historic Christianity and a Catholic Church. We cordially sympathize with him in both these respects. But we fear that while he understands so well what it is that he wishes to find, he will fail to find it, since he seems to think that it is something which lies afar off, and requires a long and laborious search. So difficult does it seem to him to grasp even the elements of this result, or to find them lying anywhere in existing systems, that he does not really know which way to turn for them with the best prospect of success. We would devote the remainder of this article to a consideration of this subject; to find out, if possible, what materials there are for the inauguration in

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Protestantism of an historic Christianity in a Catholic Church.

Historic Christianity, in its fundamental principles, we have already defined. Its most authoritative symbol is the Apostles' Creed. Its opposite poles are the natural alienation of man from God, and the supernatural redemption wrought out by the death of Christ. These opposite poles are bound together by the ministry of the Holy Ghost, through the divinely-appointed ordinances of religion. This simple creed is the key-note to the universal and perpetual harmony of the Christian Church. Man's need of Christ, Christ's sufficiency for man, and the efficacy of the grace of the Holy Spirit, have been the sublime testimony of the mightiest intellects, of the most loving and devoted hearts, of the confessors and martyrs of all ages since Christ. We have not far to seek for historic Christianity. It needs no skillful system of interpretation to find it in the Bible. The slightest as well as the most profound acquaintance with history will lead directly to it. It is to be found

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to-day wherever the natural alienation of man from God, the supernatural redemption of man by the incarnation, sufferings, and death of Christ, and the dependence of man upon the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit are acknowledged. This is historic Christianity; and no other system can possibly have that Scriptural character and that universality of reception which entitle it, in any degree, to be considered as the Christianity of history.

A great difficulty in reference to a common understanding and reception of historic Christianity has arisen from the fact that men have failed to distinguish between what they hold as a systematic statement of their theology, and what they hold as a simple statement of the two great facts of revealed religion—the Fall and the Redemption. A system of theology, although it may be exceedingly desirable, is, to a great extent, a matter of opinion. It is not a simple statement of the truths of revelation, but there is in it a very large proportion of the human element of philosophy, and of conclusions dependent upon long trains

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of reasoning. Such systems, we admit, are exceedingly important, but they have been unwarrantably elevated into an importance to which they have no claim; so that they have been held as of the essence of Christianity itself, and conformity to them required as a test of communion in the Christian Church. We have thus had an exhibition of the extraordinary spectacle of "covenants of faith," which required as a condition of membership in a Christian Church a belief in certain articles, which the very framers of the articles themselves would not claim to be essential to a saving faith in Christ. When men come to understand that there is a distinction to be made between a system of theology and a simple statement of the fundamental principles of Christianity, and that a man may hold his particular system of theology without having a Church committed to it, and may retain his connection with historic Christianity by the reception of these universally acknowledged fundamental truths; then we shall find that a union upon the basis of historic Chris-

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tianity is something practicable and likely to be attained. But so long as matters of opinion are made as important as matters of faith, and the deductions of human reason are considered as binding as the simple statements of revelation, just so long will it be impossible to bring historic Christianity into its proper place, as the doctrinal system of the Universal Church. Historic Christianity indorses no elaborate theological systems. It knows only the simplest elements of the Christian faith.

In what we have said of historic Christianity we shall not be understood as discrediting in the slightest degree the great Protestant principles, that the Scriptures are the only Rule of Faith, and that the right of private judgment is to be maintained. Each one must be free to find his own creed in the Word of God; but it is his privilege certainly, if he chooses to do so, to interpret the Scriptures by the light, and confirm his own judgment by the testimony of all ages of the Christian Church.

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There would be no difficulty in determining what the fundamental principles of Christianity are, if it was made a question simply of the interpretation of the Scriptures, or what is the testimony of historic Christianity if the question were made one merely of history. But, besides this, we are to inquire what materials are within our reach out of which may be constructed the external form of the Church of the Future. The grand conditions which, upon Dr. Bellows's general principles, must be essential to this form are, that it shall impose no unnecessary restrictions; and that it shall have its roots in existing institutions, thus connecting it with the whole past of the Christian Church. The problem is to construct, or to find already constructed, an organization by which these conditions shall be satisfied, and in which historic Christianity may be or is already enshrined.

The business of constructing a Catholic Church one would think to be, in this age of the world, a well-nigh hopeless undertaking. Dr. Bellows has no expectation of accomplish-

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ing it. The fact is, if there is not a Catholic Church already, we never shall have one, and a common basis of union, in a living body, will be forever impossible.

We are to seek, therefore, for the elements of it in what already exists. Our search is to be made among existing institutions to find, if possible, the germ of historic Christianity in a Catholic Church. Dr. Bellows furnishes us with some valuable assistance in this respect by intimating where the nearest approach is made to a satisfaction of the great want which he has so eloquently described. We take his own words. In the *Sequel to the Suspense of Faith* he says, "I think it (the Episcopal Church in this country) the most respectable church organization in Protestant Christendom, and the best entitled to imitation and adoption if any model is to prevail."

It would be hardly respectful to Dr. Bellows not to follow out the suggestion he has so generously made. We wish, therefore, to inquire what elements there are in the Episco-

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pal Church in this country which are favorable to this great cause of union, and which fit it to be the rallying-ground of Christians.

It is important, in the first place, to ascertain what is absolutely essential to the Episcopal Church, because objections against such of its rites, usages, or principles as are local or temporary are not objections against the Church itself. We hold, therefore, that what is essential to the Church is the historic form and the historic doctrine, which make it precisely that historic and comprehensive Church for which so many of the best minds of the age are seeking. Those who are outside of the Church are apt to take it for granted that the historic form of the Church in an episcopally constituted ministry necessarily involves all the evils which have been connected with the assumptions of the Papacy, or the peculiarities of a State Church. They are apt to take it for granted, also, that the Church, as such, is committed to some system of doctrine, some considering the theology of the Church as essentially Arminian, and others as essen-

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tially Calvinistic. Whereas the truth is, that all that is essential in the form of the Church is the episcopally constituted ministry, and all that is absolutely essential in its doctrine is in the fundamental, evangelical truths of the Scriptures, as expressed in the Apostles' Creed. This is all which reason, aided by the testimony of all Christian ages, can find in the Bible as essential elements of the Church. We shall not be understood, of course, as saying that there are no other distinctive peculiarities of the Episcopal Church. And we would take this opportunity to dissent from the idea of enlarging the basis of the Church by hastily sacrificing or attempting to reform peculiarities which have become distinctive. We feel thus because it is our earnest conviction that these very peculiarities which are objected to will finally be the very things which will commend the Church to the better judgment and taste of the age. But the point which we wish to make is this, that there is scarcely any serious objection entertained anywhere to what is really essential in the Epis-

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copal Church, since all acknowledge the validity of Episcopal ordination, even if they do not hold to its necessity; and certainly all evangelical Christians accept the statements of the Apostles' Creed.

No other Christian body surely occupies a position so favorable to unity. The essential features of the various denominations are such that they can not unite with each other without ignoring or abandoning their essential characteristics. But the absolutely essential elements of the Episcopal Church would require no sacrifice which a believer in the fundamental verities of Christianity need hesitate to make.

We know it will be said that practically the distinction which we make between that which is absolutely essential and those peculiarities which have become distinctive in the Church is worthless, for these very distinctive peculiarities, so long as we retain them, are as insuperable obstacles to union as if they were essential features in the Church. But it is certainly something gained, it seems to us, to

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have it understood that they do not constitute the essence of the Church, and that under the pressure of some mighty emergency, like that of the entering in of large bodies of Christians, they might be, so far at least as these bodies were concerned, modified or dispensed with altogether. This is a very different thing, however, from inviting a return by such modifications and proposed reforms, since these would only have the effect of pandering to the very evil which union is intended to cure.

It must be remembered, also, that the Episcopal Church is the only Christian body in American Protestantism which has always protested against sectarianism, and amidst very much of misunderstanding, and no little obloquy, has maintained the great principles of Christian unity. The very points in its organization, against which the principal objections have been made, are those in which, by preserving the historic character of the Church, the idea and the fact of a Catholic Church have been maintained. The Episco-

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pal Church has been thought uncharitable and exclusive because she would not release her hold upon the historic institutions of Christianity, and take her place as one of the many Christian denominations and sects. Whereas the great want of the age has been what is now coming to be generally recognized, a Church which is organically connected with the Church of all ages, and which has never surrendered its position as a Catholic Church, and assumed that of a sect. The Episcopal Church should advance her claims of Catholicity in no spirit of arrogance. If it is a Catholic Church, so much the more weighty is its responsibility, and so much the greater its condemnation if that responsibility is not discharged. The most influential portion of the Episcopal Church would most gladly admit all that the various Christian denominations claim as to their present ecclesiastical position. We speak of them without hesitation as Churches, although Catholicity belongs to our idea of the Church. In other respects we regard many of them with the highest admira-

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tion for their testimony to the great truths of the Gospel, and for their noble liberality and Christian zeal. They may well serve, in this regard, as models for our imitation. But our special mission in this age, aside from that first great mission of the proclamation of the Gospel, is to testify to the idea of the oneness of the Church of Christ, and to present the historic doctrines and institutions of Christianity as a basis for union among Christians.

One great subject which has enlisted and is now enlisting the interest of the members of the Episcopal Church is the adaptation of its institutions to the wants of the age. In reference to this great want of union among Christians, some would favor a rigid exclusiveness, and oppose any yielding whatsoever for the sake of commending the Church to those who are without. Others would drive the plough-share of radical reform through some of the richest fields and most fertile heritages of the Church. The true idea, it seems to us, is that of conservative progress, a progress which is that of organic development out of

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institutions already existing and sanctioned by the great past. In this way the truly comprehensive and catholic character of the Church will become more and more prominent to meet the recognized wants and aspirations of the age.

We are aware that a mighty host of difficulties and objections may be at once suggested against the principles we have laid down. We can not stop to consider these. Many of them we might be unable readily to meet. But of the fundamental truth, and the final acceptance of these principles, we have no manner of doubt.

It has been our object in this article to show that this age of Protestantism, as compared with other ages, is not characterized by a suspense but rather by a restoration of faith in the great principles of evangelical religion, and that a union of Christians in the Church of the future must have an historic basis in an historic faith and an historic form, and that these are to be found already existing in the Episcopal Church.

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We can not close without expressing the deepest interest in the personal experiences of those who are feeling the emptiness of rationalistic Christianity and are looking for some firmer basis for their faith. With our firm and unshaken conviction of the truth and preciousness of evangelical religion, we can hope for only one consummation of their spiritual perplexity and doubt. We trust that none of these earnest men who are looking so anxiously for the right way will suffer the sad experience of the skeptical De Wette, who wrote a short time before his death,

„Ich fiel in eine wirre Zeit,
Des Glaubens Einfalt war vernichtet.
Ich miſchte mich mit in den Streit,
Doch ach! ich hab' ihn nicht geſchlichtet."

"I lived in times of doubt and strife,
When childlike faith was forced to yield.
I struggled to the end of life;
Alas! I did not gain the field."

In reference to the great future before the Church how little can we tell! Our duty is

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to labor in the present for the kingdom of Christ. The results must be left to the inscrutable wisdom and purposes of God. We may be impatient at the long-continued strife, the protracted disunion of Christians, but God doubtless is working out in this very way far better results than we in our weakness and blindness could attain. We sometimes in our impatience would violently hasten to their development the plans of Providence. The lesson we are to learn is, to labor and to wait.

"God is patient, because he is eternal."

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THE

OXFORD ESSAYS,

AND

BADEN POWELL ON MIRACLES.

We have experienced a sensible feeling of relief after the reading of this volume of Essays. It was with some little apprehension, we confess, that we began its perusal. The flourish of trumpets with which its approach was heralded, and the acknowledged ability of its authors, led us to fear, not indeed that the advocates of the truth would be vanquished, but that some phase of error so original and portentous might arise, as to render necessary a thorough review of the Evidences of Christianity. But while we believe that this book will be the cause of great evil, and that its in-

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fluence should in every way be counteracted, we confidently assert that there is nothing new in it which is at all important in its bearing on the great subject of which it treats. The views which it presents are perfectly familiar to those who are acquainted with the German philosophy and theology of the last thirty years, and have been advocated again and again in this country with far more of learning and ability than this work displays.*

It is impossible for us to regard this work otherwise than as an assault upon Christianity; for if there is any thing definite and distinct in the Christian system, if that name carries with it any clear and positive idea to the popular mind, it is all either directly or by implication assailed in this book. It is not as if

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* The decline of Rationalism in Germany is well worthy of notice in connection with its late appearance in the Church of England. One evidence of this decline is found in the fact that, while there are in Germany three Lutheran and seven Evangelical organs, there is but one avowedly Rationalistic, the *Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theologie*, published at Jena.

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certain doctrines of the faith had been made the subject of assault; the attack is upon the very foundation upon which they all rest. The Revelation which contains them is reduced below the level of other books, for even its historical authority is denied, and we are at least left to the inference that any supernatural intervention in the affairs of men is incredible.

We have been very much struck with one feature in these "Essays." There is no sensibility manifested to the pain and sorrow which must be experienced by vast numbers of persons if the positions of these authors are well founded. Theirs is emphatically a work of destrûction. They have nothing to offer in the place of that which they seek to destroy. They would sweep away our faith in a divine Revelation—then in miracles—then in the resurrection of Christ—then, necessarily, in the life and immortality which He brought to light—and leave us perhaps, though even of that we are not assured, some naked abstractions about "Intuition" and "Absolute Truth."

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Now a man may think it would be for our spiritual benefit to lose a dear and valued friend, but we may well expect some expression of sympathy when he comes to communicate our loss; and it strikes us as evidence of no little insensibility, or else of but little expectation of success, when these essayists attempt to rob us of what is most precious to the soul, and offer us nothing in the way of compensation or comfort.

There is another remark which we wish to make upon the Essays as a whole, before we proceed to the consideration of the one which is the special subject of this article. What seems to us a very unfair imputation is cast upon those who receive what are generally regarded as the doctrines of Christianity. It is either directly asserted or covertly implied that they set themselves in opposition to well-established scientific facts, and even to the use of reason, in ascertaining or defending the Truth. On this point we are perfectly willing to join issue; and we assert that there is no class of men more favorable to scientific inquiry, or

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who have done more for institutions of learning both in England and this country, none who have in a greater degree encouraged the consideration of Christianity on rational grounds, than those who hold the very principles which in this volume are so persistently assailed.*

Our special object in this article is to consider the Essay entitled "The Study of the Evidences of Christianity," by Baden Powell, M.A., F.R.S. This Essay is selected, since it seems to us to relate to certain principles which must be settled before we can profitably engage in further inquiry.

The recent death of Prof. Powell admonishes us to deal charitably with his opinions,

* The view of intelligent, orthodox men on this point is well expressed by Bourdaloue: "La foi, je dis la foi Chrétienne, n'est point un pur acquiescement à croire, ni une simple soumission de l'esprit, mais un acquiescement et une soumission raisonables; et si cette soumission, si cette acquiescement, n'etaient pas raisonables, ce ne serait plus une vertu. Mais comment sera-ce un acquiescement, une soumission raisonables, si la raison n'y a point de part?" (*Œuvres de Bourdaloue*, tome iii. 336.)

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and places us, as it were, under an affecting and sacred obligation to the utmost fairness and candor in the consideration of his views. This obligation we wish to recognize; but unless we have wholly misunderstood the drift and significance of this and other writings of Prof. Powell, we can not but express our profound sorrow that abilities so great should have been so sadly perverted to the inculcation of the most dangerous error.

Before entering upon the subject proper of his Essay, Professor Powell attempts to remove the objection which he supposes to be felt to the discussion of the Evidences of Christianity, from his point of view. He says, we are sure, without any just foundation, "It is the common language of orthodox writings and discourses to advise the believer, when objections or difficulties arise, not to attempt to offer a precise answer or to argue the point, but rather to look at the whole subject as of a kind which ought to be exempt from critical scrutiny, and be regarded with a submission of judgment, in the spirit of hu-

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mility." * We have already referred to the glaring injustice of such an imputation, and we now say, that any such assertion, in the face of the immense amount of research and critical inquiry which is constantly being made by the advocates of orthodox opinions, is utterly without warrant. Those persons certainly indicate the strongest confidence in the consistency and truth of every part of the Scriptures, and their willingness to subject them to the closest scrutiny, who are the most actively concerned in their universal diffusion; and so far is it from being the case that there is any concealed or half-conscious suspicion of the truth of the Scriptures on the part of intelligent, orthodox men, that they are the very ones to promote, in every way, its widest circulation, to encourage every effort to ascertain its real meaning, and to furnish all the facilities from history and from science, that the inquiry may be conducted with success.

The implication here is, that orthodox men

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* Page 111.

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are not willing to hear and answer the objections urged against their views. This we must, without qualification, deny, and we need only to point to the interminable series of works in answer to such objections, as a sufficient refutation of the charge. But it would be strange indeed if orthodox men were not pained at the opposition which is waged against truths of the most vital importance. Are we expected to be indifferent in such a matter as this? Shall we regard the denial of any and all truth with composure? May the very principles of morality be assailed, and no objection urged against the assault by those to whom such principles are dear? When such objections are urged, we are willing to refute them, but must at the same time be permitted to regret the necessity. And therefore, while we do not hesitate to consider the difficulties presented in this Essay of Prof. Powell, we must say that the suggestion of such difficulties, from such a quarter, is a just cause of the deepest shame and sorrow.

We do not wish to impute to this Essay any

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opinions which it does not clearly and unmistakably express. Unhappily, Prof. Powell has not expressed himself with perfect clearness; or if his apparent is to be taken as his real meaning, then he has not expressed himself consistently, and his various statements become absolutely irreconcilable. The subject of the Essay is the evidence in behalf of Christianity from miracles. Two points seem to be presented for discussion: one is the credibility of miracles; the other is the value of them as evidences of Christianity. Now as to the impression which the Essay will generally make as to the author's opinion on these points, we can have no doubt. Inevitably the conclusion will be, that the author considers miracles as of no value as evidences of Christianity, and for the reason that he considers them intrinsically incredible and impossible. This, we say, will inevitably be the conclusion, and certainly with justice, unless we suppose what is said on this point to be grossly inconsistent, and without any meaning or significance whatever. In reference to the credibility and possibility of

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miracles, we find in this Essay the following language: "The enlarged critical and inductive study of the natural world can not but tend powerfully to evince the inconceivableness of imagined interruptions of natural order or supposed suspensions of the laws of matter."* "In nature and from nature, by science and by reason, we neither have nor can possibly have any evidence of a Deity working miracles; for that we must go out of nature and beyond reason." † We find also, it is true, passages which seem to imply that miracles are objects of faith, and as such to be believed. It is said, "Miraculous narratives become invested with the character of articles of faith." ‡ "In the popular acceptation, it is clear the Gospel miracles are always objects, not evidences, of faith." § Now if it is really meant to be asserted in this Essay that miracles are objects of faith, and that as such we are to believe that they really occurred, we can only say that it is utterly irreconcilable with the plain mean-

* Page 124. † Page 160. ‡ Page 160. § Page 161.

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ing of such passages as we have just before quoted. We are reminded, by this portion of the Essay, of the audacity of Hume, who, after a labored argument to prove that no amount of testimony could make a miracle credible, says, "Our most holy religion is founded on faith, not on reason."* If these statements of Prof. Powell mean any thing, it is an admission that without them the whole Essay would show itself to be an unqualified assault upon the very foundations of Christianity, or even of natural religion. That they do not mean to indicate the author's real conviction, that we are to believe, by faith, that miraculous events ever occurred, is evident from a comparison of two passages in this Essay; one of which is as follows, "The case of the alleged external attestations of revelation is one essentially involving considerations of *physical* evidence;"† and the other is this, "Matters of clear and positive fact, investigated on critical grounds, and supported

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* Hume's Works, vol. iv. p. 149. † Page 149.

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by exact evidence, are properly matters of knowledge, not of faith." *

One of these passages certainly declares that miracles essentially involve considerations of *physical* evidence, and the other, that matters of clear and positive fact (and such certainly are those which pertain to physical evidence), are properly matters of knowledge, not of faith.

If the question presented in this Essay concerns merely the relative value of miracles as evidences of Christianity, we do not care to argue it. But if the question is, whether we have any reasonable ground for believing that miraculous events ever occurred, then we have a subject presented of the most vital importance, and are to meet objections which are fatal, not only to revealed, but also to natural religion.

The key-note to this Essay is the alleged "inconceivableness of interruptions of natural order, or suspensions of the laws of matter." †

* Page 144. † Page 121.

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We feel that we have a right to complain, at once, of the definition which is thus given of a miracle, and of the attempt which is thus made to prejudice scientific minds against miracles by implying their contrariety to the course of nature. Prof. Powell must certainly have known that the view of miracles and nature taken by the most celebrated Christian philosophers, from St. Augustine to the present time, makes them perfectly harmonious with each other, and is itself perfectly consistent with the universality of law and the principles of inductive philosophy.

We feel also that we have good reason to complain that Prof. Powell has endeavored to excite a prejudice against a belief in miracles by representing such a conviction as inconsistent with the progress of science. This is certainly contradicted by facts, and is an appeal rather to pride than to reason, for there is nothing which is more likely to induce men to change their opinions, however unreasonable such a change may be, than to represent those opinions as founded in ignorance. We say

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also that this charge is contradicted by facts, for it is certain that the progress of scientific inquiry has illustrated and confirmed the Christian view of this subject.

One can hardly repress a smile when Prof. Powell refers to the "palpable contradictions between the facts of astronomy and the letter of the Scriptures;"* for every body uses precisely the language of the Bible in reference to this matter, and no one ever thinks of charging it with being inconsistent with the science of astronomy. And although the Copernican system is perfectly established, people will undoubtedly continue to speak to the end of time, just as the Bible does, of the "rising and setting sun," and of the "earth which can not be moved," although the sun does not move around the earth, and the earth does move around the sun. And to the end of time, men generally will no more question the veracity of the Bible for such language, than they would the veracity of each other, for the same reason.

* Page 145.

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When Prof. Powell implies that geology has disclosed contradictions between science and revelation, is he not bound to tell us that there is an interpretation of the account of the creation which the first geologist of this age has pronounced to be uncontradicted even in its minutest details by the results of geological inquiry;* and that this interpretation is in its essential features that which was well-known and favorably regarded ages before Geology came to vindicate it and show its correctness? But Prof. Powell not only disregards these facts; he goes still further. He represents the science of the day as having rejected the idea of "creation" altogether.† He goes so far as to say, "A work has now appeared by a naturalist of the most acknowledged authority—Mr. Darwin's masterly volume on 'The Origin of Species,' by the law of 'natural selection,' which now substantiates on undeniable grounds the very principle so long

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* Testimony of the Rocks. Hugh Miller. Boston: Gould & Lincoln. † Page 156.

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denounced by the first naturalists—*the origination of new species by natural causes;* a work which must soon bring about an entire revolution of opinion in favor of the grand principle of the self-evolving powers of nature."* Now whether Mr. Darwin's theory, supposing it to be true, confirms Prof. Powell's views, we do not feel called upon to decide. We can understand that it might be perfectly consistent with an enlightened Theism; but it is an assertion utterly untrue that Mr. Darwin "substantiates on undeniable grounds the origination of new species by natural causes." His theory, whether true or false, whether favorable or unfavorable to revealed truth, has not gained the recognition of the highest scientific authorities; but has, on scientific grounds, been explicitly condemned. Agassiz, in his 3d volume of *Contributions to the Natural History of the United States*, has subjected it to a most thorough and rigid examination, and emphatically rejected it. He says, "I consid-

* Page 157.

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er the transmutation theory as a scientific mistake, untrue in its facts, unscientific in its method, and mischievous in its tendency."*

Now it is certainly unwarrantable, in the face of such authority on the question of the origin of species, or the creation of the world, to claim that the present state of science on these subjects countenances the no-miracle theory, or renders the antecedent credibility of miracles, in any sense, less than it was before. The bearing of the great scientific discoveries of the present is, to our mind, exactly the reverse. If there is any one clear and indisputable result of these investigations, it is the universality of law; and the conclusion necessarily drawn from that fact, that the Creator of the world is an Infinite Intelligence. And since science has utterly failed to detect any material bond which unites different phenomena together, but only indicates to us by the fact of a connection between them, accord-

* Agassiz's Contributions to the Natural History of the United States, vol. iii. p. 113.

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ing to some fixed and definite law, the presence of a supreme Intelligence, it has done away with the idea of blind and unintelligent causes, has exhibited the supremacy of an omnipotent *Will* in nature, and has thus laid the foundation for a belief in the *possibility* of miracles. Every discovery in science which brings to light some law of action—and especially when it brings this law, as all scientific investigation is doing, into harmony with some universal system of law—adds to the already overwhelming evidence of Intelligence and Will in nature. But the stronger the evidence of a supreme Intelligence and omnipotent Will in nature, the stronger is the evidence of the possibility of miracles. The wonderful discoveries which have been recently made, adding so vastly to our knowledge of the laws of nature, must make upon every philosophical mind the impression that it is looking through these laws upon the very workings of an infinite Will; that the choice of one method of operation rather than another, is founded upon considerations of the highest reason;

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and that therefore it is perfectly *conceivable* that for causes influencing the divine Mind, this general method of operation may be superseded by another and special method, and that thus a miracle may occur. The whole drift of modern science, in this respect, strengthens, therefore, the conclusion of the possibility of miracles, under circumstances which render such a change in the Divine method of operation desirable. We say, under such circumstances, because science is not only confirming the possibility of miracles, but is showing that many events rashly supposed to be miraculous, but for the supposed miraculous character of which no adequate cause could be assigned, are not really supernatural. Thus science is at once deepening our impression of the possibility of miracles, and narrowing the circle of them to those great emergencies and necessities of our race, which are worthy of the special intervention of God.

But more than this, there is another respect in which modern science has reached results most favorable in their bearing for the advo-

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cates of miracles. The fact of the creation of new species of animal life—or to use another form of expression, the appearance of new forms of life, wholly disconnected from any preceding chain of causes and effects—presents *precisely the difficulty* which has led Professor Powell to pronounce a miracle inconceivable. Until recently, the fact of the appearance of entirely new species of animal life upon our globe, since the creation, was not known. But scientific discovery has brought this fact to light. The weight of authority, at the present time, is overwhelmingly in favor of the disconnection of these new species from any preceding ones, or from any preceding chain of causes and effects whatever. Not one single fact has ever been discovered to prove any such connection. There is nothing but the mere *theory* of the transmutation of species upon which any such alleged connection can rest. Now if new species have appeared upon our globe, entering into the system of causes and effects without previous connection with it, that event is a direct exercise of Divine power, breaking

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in upon a system of established laws, and is, in all the respects which make a miracle inconceivable in the view of Professor Powell, itself a *miracle*, and attested by the indisputable evidence of science. And if these new species should, after all, be shown to be causally connected with previous forms of life, still the advocates for miracles would have lost nothing which they possessed before these discoveries were made; and they would still have gained the confirmation which science has afforded to the conceivableness or possibility of miraculous intervention. And even then, the fact of the actual occurrence of miracles in nature is moved only one step further back; for we are compelled by the very laws of thought to choose between creation and the eternity of nature. But the eternity of nature is pantheism or atheism, and creation is MIRACLE.

There is a tendency, not in science, but in certain scientific men, to seek for a higher degree of certainty in scientific results, but only at the expense of degrading it to the narrowest limits. The great leader in this tendency

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was the late August Comte, who taught that science has to do only with the laws of phenomena, and is incompetent to inquire into their causes. Of the spirit of this philosophy Professor Powell seems to have partaken. This is indicated in what he has to say of the dissociation of the physical and spiritual—making the first only the object of knowledge, the latter the object merely of faith. He thus excludes all spiritual facts and truths from the domain of science and knowledge, and virtually limits all certainty to our knowledge of physical phenomena. According to this philosophy, we can indeed know nothing of any miraculous agency. We may be satisfied of the occurrence of certain extraordinary events, but we can not attribute them to any miraculous cause. No; nor to any cause whatever; for this philosophy shuts us out, not only from miraculous causes, but from all other causes also. It forbids us to refer phenomena to any cause. It knows of no causes in the universe, and is thus blind to the agency and even to the very existence of God. It is well that we

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should understand the exact position and tendency of this system of thought, and that it disclaims all knowledge of miraculous agency only at the expense of disclaiming all knowledge of any causes whatsoever in nature.

And in this connection it may be well to inquire what is meant by this school of writers who speak of knowledge on the one hand and faith on the other, confining the first to the physical and the latter to the spiritual world. Is it meant by objects of faith that they are realities, in the existence of which we are to believe? But on what grounds, we may inquire, is this belief to be exercised? A belief which does not rest upon evidence is worth little; and if it does rest upon evidence, it is a conviction or conclusion of the mind, the logical result of a process of reasoning, and valid or otherwise according to the sufficiency of the evidence upon which it is based. If this evidence is valid, then the conclusion of the mind involves knowledge no less than faith. We must not suffer ourselves to be misled by any such distinction between knowledge and faith.

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The real question presented is whether we have reasonable grounds for believing that what are called miracles ever occurred; in other words, is there sufficient evidence to warrant the conclusion that the inauguration of Christianity into the world was accompanied by miraculous manifestations?

This is, in the first place, simply a question of fact, to be determined like any other question of fact. The whole question, at the outset of our inquiry, reduces itself to this: did any fact occur in connection with the establishment of Christianity, in reference to which a question could arise as to whether it was a miracle? Was there any fact apparently so out of the ordinary course of things, in itself so suggestive of the supernatural, as to give any countenance to the idea that it was miraculous? We can first examine this question, and if we find that there is evidence that any such fact occurred, we can then inquire whether there is any good reason for referring it to miraculous agency.

In prosecuting this inquiry, we shall confine

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our investigation to one fact, although we are really entitled to avail ourselves of the accumulation of difficulties thrown in the way of our opponents by the necessity of explaining how so large a number of miraculous events as we find in the New Testament came to be attributed to the Founder of our religion. And we shall waive also for the present all considerations of the antecedent probability of miracles, although such considerations would lead us to regard favorably any testimony in behalf of such events. We will inquire simply whether there is any such evidence, as should be considered satisfactory, to prove that any extraordinary event, not explicable by any known laws of nature, occurred in connection with the first promulgation of Christianity in the world. Now the resurrection of Christ, if it occurred, is manifestly an event of this kind, and furnishes a test by which the whole question of the actual occurrence of miracles may be tried. And this presents to us two problems to be solved, namely, did the fact of Christ's resurrection

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actually occur; and if it occurred, was it truly a miracle?

Now on all the principles of historical evidence, looking at the question without any prejudices for or against miracles, there is no fact in history which stands upon a firmer basis than the resurrection of Christ. It is to be observed here that while we are willing to consider this question simply as a matter of fact, on the ordinary principles of historical evidence, Prof. Powell is not so disposed, but prejudges the testimony on the ground of the intrinsic inconceivableness and impossibility of miracles. He thus places himself virtually on the same ground with Hume, who asserts that no amount of testimony is sufficient to prove a miracle.

Now, in considering this matter, we do not assume that the resurrection of Christ, if it occurred, was a miracle. We only wish to inquire whether such an event did really occur. And we claim the right to treat this, as Prof. Powell complains that orthodox men are unwilling to treat it, simply as a question

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of fact, to be determined like any other fact, by testimony, and without any bias against the fact, arising from any supposed impossibility of miracles. If it turns out to be a fact, it is open to any one to deny that it was a miracle. That is not now the question. We are now concerned simply with the inquiry whether the alleged fact of Christ's resurrection rests upon unimpeachable testimony.

Nothing, it seems to us, can be added to the masterly treatment of this subject by Paley. It is easy to sneer at Paley, and much easier and cheaper than to attempt to answer his arguments. So far is his work on the Evidences of Christianity from becoming obsolete, as Prof. Powell asserts, that Archbishop Whately has only met a deep want of the age in editing it, and accompanying it with his admirable Annotations.* As the argument of this book is of the nature of demonstration, and is not likely to be improved upon, we need only to commend it to

* Paley's Evidences. With Whately's Annotations. James Miller, New-York.

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our readers as exhibiting a striking contrast in thoroughness of research and cogency of reasoning to the *Essays and Reviews*. It is only necessary for us to indicate the principal points in this argument, and the process by which each step is conclusively established may be examined in the work itself.

No historical fact, then, is more conclusively established than that the assertion of Christ's resurrection was made by His Apostles and original disciples. And this certainty, it must be remembered, does not depend at all upon our belief in the divine authority of the Scriptures. It could be established even if the Four Gospels did not exist. This fact is fatal to the idea that the story of the resurrection was a gradual growth, like some of the supernatural accounts in heathen mythology. Such accounts require time for their development, and the absence of contemporary records, that they may not be immediately refuted. The original Christian story asserted the resurrection of Christ as a fact occurring not in a far distant past, but at that very

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time. It is also certain that many of those by whom the resurrection was asserted, declared that they themselves had seen Jesus alive after his death and burial. Of this, at least, there can be no doubt that we have now in our possession the testimony of those who claimed to have been eye-witnesses of that which they declare to be true. Now this testimony must be either true or false. These witnesses either saw Jesus alive after his death and burial, or they did not. If their testimony is true, then the fact of the resurrection actually occurred. If it is false, then one of two suppositions must be made. These witnesses were either impostors or else they were honestly deceived. If neither of these suppositions can be maintained, their testimony must be received as true.

Is it possible that they were impostors? But imposture necessarily implies some motive, either of pleasure, or honor, or gain. Now, there is the most satisfactory evidence that no such motive could have influenced the original witnesses to the fact of Christ's res-

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urrection. From the very circumstances of the case, they had nothing to gain by this assertion, supposing it to be false. More than this, they had every thing to lose. They everywhere proclaimed the fact of the resurrection, and everywhere suffered as a necessary consequence. Some of them even sealed their testimony with their blood. To suppose that they persistently exposed themselves to contempt, to persecution, and to death, without the slightest counterbalancing advantage, in attestation of what they knew to be a lie, is a supposition unequalled in absurdity.

Were they honestly deceived? In considering this supposition, it must be remembered that they testify simply to a matter of fact. It is not testimony in behalf of opinions which we are now considering. It is a question of the evidence of the senses. It must be remembered, then, that it was not to one only, but to many that Jesus appeared—that He appeared not once merely, but again and again —that it was not of the nature of an apparition coming for an instant, and then vanish-

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ing away, but that He talked with His disciples, sat with them, ate with them, and gave them His final commands in reference to His spiritual kingdom. His actual presence was certified to them even by the sense of touch. And the conviction of the reality of the resurrection was thus forced upon them against all their preconceptions and in spite of all their doubts.

But there is one point which is perfectly conclusive in reference to this supposition. If they were honest men and yet the subjects of an illusion, then the body of Jesus must have been still in the sepulchre. Why did not the Jews produce it as a refutation of the story of the disciples, and to cure them of their enthusiasm? So far was this from being the case, that the Jews, not having possession of the body, charged the disciples with stealing it away. If the body of Jesus was fraudulently removed, it must have been by His disciples; but in that case, their story of His resurrection must have been a willful falsehood persisted in, though there was nothing to gain

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and every thing, even life itself, to lose. If the disciples were honestly mistaken, the body of Jesus was still present, to correct at once any illusion of the senses. Still further, however, it is impossible that the disciples could have been mistaken; for they explicitly assert, not only that they saw Jesus alive, but that they visited and examined His tomb, and that His body was not there.

Some exceedingly curious results in reference to the credibility of testimony are presented by writers on Probability—a department of science founded by Pascal and Fermat about the middle of the seventeenth century. These results illustrate the subject of which we are treating. According to these calculations, supposing the probabilities against any event to be a million million to one, the testimony of thirteen witnesses whose veracity is rated at only nine tenths would suffice to render it probable that the event occurred.*

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* "For example, let the odds against the event be a million million to one, that is—

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On the supposition, then, that the moral wants of man remove in the degree of one half the antecedent improbability of the resurrection of Christ, and that the veracity of the witnesses, as in the case of the Apostles, is unimpeached—we have the probability of the event, mathematically considered, overwhelmingly established.

In short, to one capable of appreciating the force of moral evidence, no historical fact could be more conclusively established than that Jesus rose from the dead.

But if Jesus actually rose from the dead—if this fact is established, like any other historical fact, on testimony, and that, too, provi-

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Let $p = \frac{1}{1,000,000,000,001} = \frac{1}{10^{12}+1}$,

and let v the veracity of each witness be $\frac{9}{10}$. In order that $\overline{w}^x$ may equal $\frac{1}{2}$, we must have $\left(\frac{1-v}{v}\right)^x \frac{1-p}{p} = 1$. Now, $\frac{1-v}{v} = \frac{1}{9}$ and $\frac{1-p}{p} = 10^{12}$, therefore, $(\frac{1}{9})^x \times 10^{12} = 1$; whence x $\log \frac{1}{9} = \log \frac{1}{10}^{12}$, or $x \log 9 = 12$, and therefore $x = \frac{12}{\cdot 954424} = 12.6$ nearly, so that 13 independent witnesses would suffice to render it more probable that the event really took place than that it did not."—Enc. Brit. Art. "Probability."

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dentially, of the most conclusive character, then we ask, what better or more rational explanation can be given of it than that it was a miracle? To admit the fact, and yet to deny the cause, is an outrage upon common sense and all the convictions of reason. And this point, we insist, must be pressed to its logical consequences, which sweep away every vestige of arguments to prove that miracles are incomprehensible and impossible.

It will be noticed that we have not added to our argument those considerations of the antecedent probability of miracles arising from the moral condition of man, which greatly predispose us to receive suitable testimony in regard to them as true. We would only remark in reference to the value of this argument in removing what might otherwise be the incredibility of miracles, that there are facts constantly occurring in our experience, which would antecedently be deemed in the highest degree incredible, were it not for the moral ends which they subserve. A great moral end to be gained tends to remove,

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therefore, the antecedent incredibility of any event.

Finally, we would observe, that when Professor Powell speaks of the "inconceivableness of interruptions of natural order, or suspensions of the laws of matter," and makes this the basis of an argument against miracles, he seems to us to have fallen into some confusion of thought. It is not clear what he means by "natural order" and the "laws of matter." Does he mean that we have now a full knowledge of the laws of the system of nature, and that this knowledge may not be modified by future discovery? Does he mean that there can be nothing which, so far as science goes, will be an interruption of this order, or suspension of these laws? Then we have already attained the utmost limit of human science, and may rest confident that our ideas of nature are not henceforth to be disturbed, and that any thing not found in the system of causes and effects, as we now understand it, is impossible. Is it not a far truer idea of nature to consider it simply as a convenient

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term for that part of the universal system of things which comes under our observation? And is it not a far higher idea of law to regard it only as the method of the Divine operation, in the universal system of things? May not a miracle, therefore, though disconnected from the chain of causes and effects usually exhibited to us, fall in harmoniously with the great laws of the universe? Is not that the true philosophy, which, in determining the possibilities of things, takes into account the moral facts of our being? And is not a reason sufficiently strong for the establishment of higher laws, introducing even miracles into the system of nature, to be found in the sin and the redemption of man?

Those whose investigations are confined to mere physical phenomena and the laws which govern them, and whose survey is limited by the sphere of their own experience, will be likely to consider miracles as inconceivable and incredible; but the question of miracles presents no difficulties to one who has a large and comprehensive view of nature; who has

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carefully studied the principles of historical criticism and the laws of evidence; who is deeply impressed with the moral and spiritual wants of man, and who believes in the being and government of God.

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THE UNITED STATES A NATION.

The strange phase of national life, through which we are now passing, has brought up for discussion and settlement many questions which pre-eminently demand conscientious and Christian consideration. These questions have attended not only the inauguration and progress of the great struggle in which we are engaged, but they must be reconsidered and acted upon in that reconstruction of the dissevered portions of the Republic which we have reason to hope is not far distant. The most fundamental of these questions is, undoubtedly, that which relates to the nature of that union which was established between the several States at the formation of the Constitution. This is, therefore, the first question which we propose to discuss.

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At the earliest period of our history, a tendency toward the union of the American colonies is evident. A New-England confederacy was formed in 1643. In 1697, William Penn proposed an annual congress of all the colonies. In 1754, a congress of commissioners, from colonies north of the Potomac, assembled at Albany, and a plan of union was submitted by Benjamin Franklin. In 1765, James Otis, in the legislature of Massachusetts, proposed an American Congress, and the legislature of South-Carolina has the immortal honor of first responding to the call of her sister State by the choice of deputies. This Congress, in which most of the colonies were represented, met on the 7th of October, 1765, in the city of New-York. In 1774, a Continental Congress for the assertion of the rights of the American people, was proposed by the "Sons of Liberty" of New-York. In 1775, Benjamin Franklin, true to the grand design which, twenty-one years before, he had proclaimed at Albany, advocated a permanent Confederation. Articles of Confederation were adopted in

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1777; and in 1781, the ratifications of all the States having been received, Congress assembled under the new powers. It soon, however, became apparent that a stronger central government and a more perfect union were necessary. Accordingly, in 1786 the General Assembly of Virginia proposed that Commissioners should be appointed by the various States to take into consideration some plan for remedying the defects of the Federal Government. A meeting of Commissioners was accordingly held at Annapolis in September of the same year. Under a deep sense of the magnitude of the objects committed to them, they suggested to Congress that a Convention of delegates should be recommended to be held, on the second Monday of the following May, in the city of Philadelphia, to devise such measures as should "render the Federal Constitution adequate to the exigencies of Government and the preservation of the Union."

Under this recommendation, the Federal Convention was held in 1787. After the

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most mature deliberation and the most thorough and statesmanlike discussion of the principles involved, a Constitution for a National Government was proposed and submitted to the people of the several States for their ratification. Conventions of delegates, appointed by the people of each State for that special purpose, assembled, and carefully considered and discussed the plan proposed. In June, 1788, nine States having ratified the Constitution (New-Hampshire being the ninth), it became the fundamental law of the land. In 1790, it had been ratified by the people of all the thirteen States, so that all the people now comprised in the Union have either ratified it or have adopted it and been admitted in accordance with its provisions.

The significance of these historical facts is in the constant and increasing tendency to union which they exhibit—a tendency so irresistible that it refused to be satisfied until it had reached the highest attainable degree of perfection and permanence. They plainly indicate a pressing forward of the people

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toward union. There is no backward step, no weakening of the bonds which held them together; and the consummation is not thought to be reached while there is any thing left undone which could make the Union more perfect and enduring. It is an irresistible conclusion from these facts, taken in connection with the various circumstances of the natural characteristics of this country, that a Union of these States is our destiny, and that any attempt to loosen or destroy it is at variance with the great law of our history, inconsistent with the true welfare and happiness of the people, and must therefore utterly and signally fail.

But while these facts indicate that the Union which was finally established was designed to exclude all causes which could possibly lead to its dissolution, and to be as perfect and permanent as the nature of human institutions would admit, it is more to our purpose to inquire what the true character of the Constitution and Government then established is; and whether there is involved in them, either

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directly or indirectly, expressly or by implication, in the theory upon which they were based, or in their practical operation, any foundation for the idea that, under their provisions, or in accordance with their genius and spirit, any one of the States may peaceably retire from its association with the rest; whether, in short, such an act is not a violent rupture, utterly unprovided for in the fundamental law of the land.

The ground upon which this alleged right of each State peaceably to retire from the Union is founded, is the claim that each State was originally possessed of all the rights and privileges of sovereignty; that a compact has been entered into between the several States, by which certain powers are delegated to a central Government, the inalienable rights of sovereignty being necessarily reserved to each State; and that each State may therefore at any time revoke its delegated powers, upon grounds deemed sufficient by itself, and assume a position of independence among the nations of the world. This is an entirely different

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claim from that of the right of a people to choose their own form of government. This is a claim that the nature of the Union of the States under the Constitution is such that any one may legitimately withdraw; and that, being itself sovereign, it is responsible to no other power for the reasons which may prompt to the act.

In opposition to this idea, we shall show that the States of this Union never were sovereign States, except in a secondary and qualified sense; that the Constitution is not of the nature of a compact between them; but that, emanating from the people, independently of their State governments, it constituted one nation and a national government, operating, not upon States, but upon individuals; that individual, therefore, as well as State allegiance is due to it; and that its authority can not, therefore, be resisted or thrown off, either by individuals or States, in this any more than in any other national government.

It by no means follows, even if the States were sovereign previous to the adoption

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of the Constitution, that they are sovereign now, or have a right to resume their delegated sovereignty. But the simple fact in the case is, that they never were, in the full sense of the word, sovereign States. They came into being as colonies of Great Britain. They existed by virtue of charters from her. From some of them these charters were subsequently withdrawn, and they thus became still less entitled to the claims of sovereignty. They could exercise none of the attributes of sovereignty absolutely. If they could declare war, it was only in self-defence. This dependent condition they acknowledged; and when they revolted from the mother-country, it was on the admitted ground of revolt and revolution. Up to the Declaration of Independence, there is not the shadow of foundation for a claim that they were sovereign States.

Neither this Declaration nor the subsequent recognition of independence had the effect of establishing the sovereignty of the separate States. The Declaration itself was the united act of all; and by the common and united

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efforts of all, independence was finally attained. During all the period from the Declaration of Independence to the adoption of the Federal Constitution, there never was a day when any State was in the possession of absolute and unrestricted sovereignty. The final achieving of independence vested the sovereignty in the people who had gained it; and vindicated for them the right to constitute one nation, and to establish such a government as they chose. This community of effort in the great struggle for independence has nowhere been more nobly asserted and acknowledged than by the sons of South-Carolina. In the Convention which ratified the Constitution in that State, Robert Barnwell said, "I see no man who does not know that the shackles of the South were broken asunder by the arms of the North." "When we stood with the spirit but the weakness of youth, they supported us with the vigor and prudence of age."* Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, on the

* Elliot's Debates on the Federal Constitution, vol. 4, p. 292.

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same occasion exclaimed, "Who have been the greatest sufferers in the Union by our obtaining our independence? I answer, the Eastern States. They have lost every thing but their country and their freedom."* And the same distinguished statesman of South-Carolina, in speaking of the Declaration of Independence, says, "This admirable manifesto sufficiently confutes the doctrine of the individual sovereignty and independence of the several States." "The separate independence and individual sovereignty of the several States were never thought of by the enlightened band of patriots who framed this Declaration."†

But, even supposing them to have been absolutely sovereign States during that period (for the contrary supposition is not necessary to, although it may strengthen our argument), the whole question depends upon the nature of that Government which was established when the Constitution was adopted.

Was this a Government, then, to which

* Elliot's Debates, vol. 4, p. 284.

† Ib. vol. 4, p. 301.

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certain rights were delegated by the separate States—a compact into which these States voluntarily entered, and from which they may accordingly retire at their own will? If such a Government was designed to be formed, or was really formed by the framers of the Constitution, then we are wholly in the wrong in offering any resistance to the Southern States.

But nothing is clearer than that no such Government was formed, and none such intended to be formed. Even under the Confederation, it is extremely doubtful whether any one State had the right to secede from the others; and it is a monstrous absurdity to suppose that the framers of the Constitution, in endeavoring to form a more "perfect Union," should have strengthened a doubtful into a perfect right to secede from and dissolve the Union which they formed.

An examination of the Constitution itself and of the discussions which attended its formation and preceded its adoption, sufficiently indicates its true character and object. Never

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was a Constitution the subject of more thorough deliberation or the fruit of purer patriotism or profounder wisdom. When we come to interpret the Constitution by the declarations of those who framed it, it may be said that these have only the weight of individual opinions; but they go farther than that. Great as is the weight to be attached to the opinions of the statesmen who framed the Constitution, their declarations are still more important, as showing the kind of Government which they intended to establish. In this relation, the statements even of those who opposed the Constitution, and the arguments which they employed against it, are of equal significance.

Taking, then, the Constitution itself and the discussions in the Federal Convention, and the Conventions of the several States, as guides in our investigation, we find that all the facts in the case point one way, and lead to conclusions entirely opposite to the idea that this Government is the result of a compact between sovereign States.

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In the first place, the Government, whatever its nature, was not formed by the several States in their organic capacity, but by the original act of the people of the whole land. The Constitution was referred, not to the State Governments for adoption, but directly to the people of the several States. And that this course was designed to prevent any claim on the part of any State to absolve itself from its obligations is evident from the remarkable language of Mr. Madison, as given in the Madison Papers. Mr. Madison suggested that "as far as the Articles of Union were to be considered as a treaty only, of a particular sort, among the Governments of independent States, the doctrine might be set up that a breach of any one article by any of the parties absolved the other parties from the whole obligation. For these reasons, as well as others, he thought it indispensable that the new Constitution should be ratified in the most unexceptionable form, and by the supreme authority of the people themselves."*

* Madison Papers, p. 157.

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This Constitution, being thus the creature, not of the States, but of the people of the United States, established a national Government operating directly upon the people, without the intervention of State Governments; and did not establish a mere league or compact from which any State might retire at will.

It is wonderful that those who are acquainted with the evidence on this subject could venture for a moment to question this conclusion. The friends of the proposed Constitution advocated its adoption in the various Conventions on the very ground that it remedied the defects of the Confederation by establishing a national government operating directly upon the people, and not a mere league of States; and its opponents objected to it for precisely the same reason. The instances in which this was assumed to be the true object of the Constitution, both by its friends and foes, are far too numerous to be mentioned. Nobody in all these deliberations ever undertook to urge that the plan proposed

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was of a different character. Whether in favor of or opposed to the Constitution, all argued either for or against it on this very ground. Charles Pinckney, of South-Carolina, only gave utterance to what every body admitted when he said, "Though the Confederation might possess the great outlines of a general government, yet it was, in fact, nothing more than a federal union." . . . "Nothing can be more true," said he, "than that the promoters of the Constitution had for their object a firm national government."*

The objection constantly urged against the proposed Constitution was that it infringed upon the rights of the several States. Now, if the right of secession from the Union was guaranteed or implied in the Constitution, the simple statement of this fact would have been a conclusive answer to the objection; but no one ever intimated that such a right was recognized, in any way, in the Constitution. On the contrary, finding that the new Consti-

* Elliot's Debates, vol. 4, p. 355.

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tution and Government were entirely inconsistent with the assertion of any such right, a member of the New-York Convention moved that the Constitution be ratified on the condition that the State might retire from the Union, if certain amendments were not, within a certain time, adopted; but the idea was so wholly foreign to the plan proposed that it was at once rejected.*

Among the various opinions represented in the Federal Convention there were two at opposite extremes. One opinion favored a mere league of States; the other, the annihilation of the State Governments and a consolidation of the whole people. Those who now claim the right of secession do so on the ground that the Constitution is a mere compact of States. But it is a remarkable fact that the most persistent advocate of State rights at the Federal Convention, the celebrated Luther Martin, opposed and denounced the Constitution, because he regarded it as a

* Elliot's Debates, vol. 2, p. 112.

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victory of those who desired the annihilation of the State Governments.*

There is one point in this matter that well deserves to be considered. If this Constitution is a mere compact among sovereign States, from which any one may retire at will, then the enemies of the Constitution persistently opposed a system which favored their own views, and the advocates of the Constitution as persistently maintained and established a Government, in direct opposition to the very principles which they were able so successfully to defend. To suppose that the friends of a firm, national, consolidated Government, operating directly upon the people, without the intervention of the States, should have by the most earnest and persistent effort established a mere compact among the several States, and that, too, in spite of the most determined opposition on the part of those by whom such a compact was above all desired, is a supposition unequalled in absurdity. And yet this is the

* Elliot's Debates, vol. 1. Luther Martin's Letter.

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very absurdity which is inevitably involved in the supposition that the Constitution is a mere compact among sovereign States, from which each may retire at will.

It is possible that the advocates of the constitutional right of secession being driven to this absurdity, might endeavor to base it upon the inalienable right of a people to form such a government as they please. It might be urged that inasmuch as the people of the several States formed this Government, so the people of any one State might retire from it. But this claim entirely overlooks the fact that there are constitutional methods by which the Government may be changed, and the people have voluntarily bound themselves to make use of these methods, if any are necessary. They have thus excluded themselves from the use of any other. For the people of a single State to change their government by secession, is a violation of the law by which they voluntarily bound themselves, and which prescribes the only methods by which their Government can legitimately be changed.

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Besides, this claim of a portion of the people to change a government established by the whole people, is utterly destitute of foundation, even although it be the entire people of a State. The principle is monstrously disorganizing, and under it no government could maintain itself in respectable efficiency for a single year. If this Constitution is not a compact among sovereign States, but a national Government emanating from the people of the whole country, then the States stand in no different relation to the general government from that in which counties and towns stand to the several States. Indeed, we have the great authority of Mr. Madison for saying that the relation in the two cases is analogous.* But will any one undertake to say that the people of a county or town, however unanimous they may be, can legitimately, by their own act, dissolve their civil connection with the State? Will any abstract principle as to the inalienable rights of the people warrant such a proceeding? And is not the claim itself fa-

* Madison Papers, p. 222.

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tal to any idea of society and government which it is possible for us to entertain? The right of a people to change its government by any other than the constitutional methods, is a right, indeed, but it is the right of *revolution;* a right necessarily to be assailed and defended by the dread arbitrament of arms.

Yes, there is the right of revolution; the right to rise against merciless and tyrannical governments; the right to spurn the heel that is crushing us into the dust; the right to cast off the fetters which manacle every industry and enterprise of life, and restrain development and progress, and bind conscience to the homage of falsehood and crime. Yes, there is this right. When all other remedies have failed, and every other hope is exhausted, then the sword may rightly be drawn. No blood is more sacred than that which has been shed in such a cause, and no names stand higher on the immortal roll of fame than the names of the heroes and martyrs who have defended this holy right even to the death.

But a terrible and sublime indignation is

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merited by the claim that this Government has provoked such a revolution. The cheek mantles with honest shame when we are called to repel so groundless an aspersion. In a crisis so solemn, where such unspeakable consequences rest upon the rectitude of the cause in which we are engaged, we may well make our appeal to a righteous God, whether the Government of this country, with all its faults, is justly amenable to such a charge as this.

Those are serious evils, indeed, which justify revolution and the bathing of the land with blood. No imaginary or apprehended wrongs, no mere questions of expediency or policy will suffice, but deep and burning outrage upon the dearest and holiest rights. It is from this that sacred revolutions are born. Are we engaged in contending against the moral power of such a revolution? Are there such just and grievous causes of complaint against the Government under which we live, and are all prospects of removing them so hopeless,

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that those who suffer have been compelled to appeal to the sword?

In meeting this view of the case, we are embarrassed by the fact that there is no document issued by competent authority, which undertakes to specify, clearly and distinctly, such grievances. The charges made against the Government are vague and general, scarcely in any case sufficiently specific to be capable of a direct answer. But gathering up the various grievances which are alleged, are we not compelled without bitterness, but with the solemn sternness of truth, to declare that they fall immeasurably below the dignity of wrongs which justify revolution? It has been said that the course of national legislation has been unfavorable to the interests of the South. If this is the case, it has been the fault of the South; for they have controlled almost exclusively the policy of the country. Has the fishing bounty been an outrage upon Southern rights? Let it be remembered that it was favored by Southern statesmen, as the best means of strengthening a navy for the

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protection of the seaboard of the South. Are navigation acts regarded as unfavorable in their bearing upon Southern interests? Let it be remembered that Southern statesmen have been their most decided and persistent advocates. Is the tariff such a ground of complaint as to justify revolution? Let it be remembered that the tariff under which the rebellion was inaugurated was voted for by the representatives of South-Carolina as well as of Massachusetts. Is it alleged that the South has borne the chief burden in the support of the government? It can be supported only by some strange theory unknown to political economists. But, while it can not be shown that the South has borne this burden, it can be shown that she has enjoyed the chief honors and emoluments of the Government. Has the South been outstripped in any sense in the career of prosperity by the North? It has been from no fault of the General Government. The inevitable laws of nature have insured to the North a more rapid progress. The discovery at the close of

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the last century of the peculiar character of the Gulf Stream has done more than any one cause, to make the present difference between Charleston and New-York. Does even the slavery question, in all its overwhelming importance, present grievances which justify revolution? The prevalent feeling at the North is opposed, indeed, to slavery; but is that a cause of justifiable revolution, so long as it is confined to mere moral aggression? Political agitation of the subject, even, is no excuse for revolution, until some actual grievance is experienced, especially when this agitation proposed to leave the institution of slavery untouched where it already exists, and exclude it only from territories into which its friends declared that it was impossible for it to enter. But even of this the Government was guiltless. The Government has given to the South a representation of one eleventh of the lower House of Congress, which it holds wholly in virtue of its slave population, while the North has received only to a very small extent, the correlative benefit which it was sup-

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posed it would derive from the direct taxation of the slave property of the South. The South in the interest of slavery desired the annexation of Texas, and it was granted. The South desired the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, and it was done. The South desired a decision of the Supreme Court that the Constitution protected this institution throughout all the territories of the Union, and the decision was virtually given. The North has been full of friends to the South, full of those who have heretofore generously espoused her cause, full of those who went with her until it was clear she was on the brink of treason, full of those who have even restrained their natural emotions and inclinations, and almost silenced conscience in their anxious desire to be even more than just to Southern rights; and these are the advocates and friends whom, in the madness of the hour, the South cast from her, until the repressed convictions of the North, which dashed but lightly, like summer waves upon the shore, against the institutions of the South,

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have now swollen up into mountain billows, borne on by the sweep of wintry tempests, until all is overwhelmed in the wildness of their rage.

The nationality of the United States, thus established in the Constitution by the people, and thus assailed, it is our sacred duty to vindicate. It is not only our own interests which we have in charge; we can not yield to rebellion without sacrificing the very principle upon which our Government is founded, without betraying the cause of freedom throughout the world, without being faithless even to the cause of peace, and entailing strife and misery upon future ages.

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EVOLUTION

AND A

PERSONAL CREATOR.

THE subject assigned to me in this Course of Lectures is "Evolution and a Personal Creator." It presents perhaps the most important aspect of the great controversy which is carried on, in this age, between science and religion. The conflict which, in former years, was waged upon the battle-fields of Astronomy and Geology, now waxes most fierce upon the long lines of vegetable and animal development. On the one side are those who claim to be the discoverers of certain facts and laws in nature as to the history of life on our globe, and the circumstances under which its

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various species have appeared. On the other, are the advocates of a fundamental religious truth which they claim is seriously compromised by these alleged facts and laws.

It will be my purpose, in this Lecture, to take into consideration the present aspect of the controversy, so as to ascertain, if possible, what is likely to be its result in regard to the interests of Religion, both natural and revealed.

I can not claim to come to the consideration of this subject without bias, or, in fact, without positive convictions. It is a profound saying of Goethe, "I can promise to be upright, but not to be without bias." It would be impossible for me to put myself in the attitude of indifference in regard to any question involving the existence of a Personal God. But I think I can claim to be earnestly desirous to consider dispassionately and candidly whatever theory may be urged as to natural phenomena, and the laws by which they are governed. I can certainly claim to have large sympathy with scientific investiga-

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tion, and with the spirit, on the whole, in which it is prosecuted. In regard to the aspect of the general subject now before us, I would say, at the outset, that it is no part of my purpose to attempt to refute the theory of evolution. I wish to hold, for the present, the position which Mr. Gladstone has recently assumed in regard to it, that of a suspense of judgment. I would say, however, that the direction of scientific discovery, for the last few years, seems to me to render it not improbable that, before this generation has passed away, some theory of evolution will be generally accepted as the most rational explanation of the phenomena of nature. With this conviction, I shall make it my special object to show that, even if some theory of evolution should come to be established as a scientific truth, it would not militate against any interest peculiar to Christianity, or in any way compromise the fundamental principle of religion—the personality of God.

It will be necessary, as our first step, to define the terms in which our subject is stated.

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This can be done only generally, and with approximate correctness; for fuller definitions would shut us up to some one of the various forms in which, on the one hand, the theory of evolution, or, on the other, the truth of the personality of God, is held.

To begin with EVOLUTION. Some idea of the difficulty of an accurate definition of evolution may be derived from the fact that Mr. Herbert Spencer, a writer not usually wanting in clearness of statement, defines it as follows: "*Evolution is an integration of matter and concomitant dissipation of motion; during which the matter passes from an indefinite, incoherent homogeneity, to a definite, coherent heterogeneity; and during which the retained motion undergoes a parallel transformation.*" Scientific as such a definition is, it is evidently unfit for popular use. We must seek for some other, which, while it will have less of scientific accuracy and completeness, will better answer the purpose we have in view. When we speak in this discussion of evolution, we mean the theory accord-

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ing to which all life on our globe is derived in a continuous and unbroken series, by natural generation, from original organisms. In extending the theory to its most general form, it embraces all phenomena, inorganic as well as organic; and affirms that all phenomena are linked with and proceed from preceding phenomena, by a process of development, in accordance with universal laws, from the most simple to the most complex forms.

The doctrine of a Personal Creator affirms the existence of a Being from whom all the phenomena of the Universe proceed, and by whom the laws by which they are governed were established. This Being, the doctrine also affirms, is self-conscious, and has those attributes without which personality is unknown to us—reason, affections, and will.

The idea of the absolute continuity of this process of evolution necessarily excludes the idea of the exercise, since the beginning of the process, of what has usually been understood as creative power. Here is one point where the theory is thought to militate against

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the idea of a Personal Creator. It seems, according to this objection, to diminish the need of a Creator. Then it is generally held by the advocates of this theory, that back of this development, or previous to this beginning, if it had a beginning, lies the unknowable; and the conclusion drawn is, that if there is a Personal Creator, it is to us as if he were not, for we can not know him. Besides this, whatever discredits that which has been accepted as a revelation of a Personal Creator, tends to diminish our sense of His Being; and since the theory of Evolution seems to conflict with the account given in the Scriptures of the Origin of Man, it has been thought that in this way also it not only compromises interests peculiar to Christianity, but tends to undermine our faith in the existence of a Personal Creator.

In entering upon the argument required by this supposed antagonism between the theory of evolution and the truth of the existence of a Personal Creator, it seems to me desirable to find some ground which can be held in common by the evolutionist, even if he is not

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a theist, and the theist, even if he is not an evolutionist.

Or, in other words, I should be glad to conduct this inquiry upon the basis of an agreement between theists who are open to whatever considerations may be urged in favor of the theory of evolution, and evolutionists who, while their primary object is the investigation of nature upon scientific principles, are ready to consider candidly the arguments which may be urged in behalf of the presence and agency of a Personal God in nature.

In order to accomplish this, let it be remembered that the evolutionist holds that there has been a period in the history of being when whatever existed phenomenally was homogeneous, that is, all alike. What that was which then existed as matter, that is, as capable of affecting us as what we call matter now does, the evolutionist will not undertake to determine. It may have been of inconceivable tenuity, or it may have been, though having all the attributes of what we call matter, only coexistent, immeasurably diffused force-cen-

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tres. Some such condition the evolutionist must believe to have at one time existed.

There is no difficulty whatever for the theist in this view. Indeed, he most readily represents to himself in this way the phenomenal result of the original creative act. We have then here a common ground upon which both can stand. It is the critical point too in the whole controversy. The waves of this boundless ether, pulsating with its all-pervading forces, are perfectly representable in thought. Let us see if we, theists and evolutionists, can venture back together into the mysterious depths which preceded the phenomenal condition, in the presence of which we are now supposed to stand; and then, turning our faces to the future, follow on together, in thought, through the vast cycles of time, the stupendous developments of the Universe.

If the evolutionist should say here that it is true that such a condition of things must have existed, but that it is impossible to conceive of any preceding period when the phenomenal did not exist, this is true indeed; but it

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will not prevent our standing on common ground, nor impede the progress of our argument. It is impossible indeed to conceive of a beginning of phenomena, but it is also impossible to conceive of phenomena not having a beginning; and if the evolutionist urges the one, the theist can balance it by urging the other. So far then there is nothing gained or lost upon either side. Let the theist waive the point of what precedes phenomena, and put the inquiry in this form: what is that which underlies phenomena and the forces which in phenomena are disclosed? The evolutionist can not stand upon the ground of utter nescience. He is compelled to admit, and he does admit, Absolute Being. He may say that we can not know Absolute Being, but he is obliged to say that we know that Absolute Being exists. Mr. Herbert Spencer himself says, "*By the very conditions of thought we are prevented from knowing any thing but relative being; yet by these very conditions of thought, an indefinite consciousness of Absolute Being is necessitated.*" "*The axiomatic truths*

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of physical science unavoidably postulate Absolute Being as their common basis." "*Both Religion and Science are obliged, by the demonstrated untenability of their supposed cognitions, to confess that the Ultimate Reality is incognizable, and yet both are obliged to assert the existence of an ultimate reality. Without this, Religion has no subject-matter; and without this, Science, subjective and objective, lacks its indispensable datum. We can not construct a theory of internal phenomena without postulating Absolute Being; and unless we postulate Absolute Being, or being which persists, we can not construct a theory of external phenomena.*" (*First Principles*, p. 190.)

It is impossible to overestimate the importance, in our argument, of this admission of Mr. Spencer. The theist and evolutionist alike have thus transcended phenomena and all the laws of their succession, and recognized an Ultimate Reality and Absolute Being. It matters not now what we know of this Being. We shall have occasion hereafter to consider that. Our point now is that theists and evo-

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lutionists have together drawn aside the phenomenal vail which hides the arcana of nature, and recognized the Absolute Being within the sanctuary of the Universe.

But as we stand, theists and evolutionists, in imagination, in the presence of this boundless ocean of force-centres or ultimate atoms of matter, and recognize beyond and beneath it an Ultimate Reality and Absolute Being, the inquiry inevitably suggests itself, What is the relation of the Phenomenal Universe to the Absolute Being? It may be said that it is impossible for us to have any knowledge in regard to any such relation, and that the whole subject is necessarily shrouded in impenetrable obscurity. But it may be replied that, if the whole matter is thus beyond the sphere of human knowledge, then it is of course as unwarrantable to deny the relation as to affirm it. The evolutionist would not hesitate to admit this. It would follow, then, upon this admission, that it is at least as reasonable to affirm this relation as to deny it. The evolutionist might very probably agree

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that it is more reasonable to suppose that there is some relation between Absolute Being and the Phenomenal Universe. It is allowable for us at least to make the supposition that there is some relation, and still further to make some supposition as to what the relation is. These allowable suppositions we can use as working hypotheses. Without stopping now to examine the question as to whether we are entirely ignorant of Absolute Being and of its relation to the phenomenal Universe, we will go only so far as the evolutionist will permit us to go without denying the validity of our position. He will not object to our hypotheses, since, in regard to a matter of which, as he holds, we are entirely ignorant, any hypothesis is just as likely to be true as false. Postponing then any effort to show the validity of our hypotheses, I would suppose that a relation exists between Absolute Being and the phenomenal Universe; that Absolute Being is Personal Being with reason, affections, and will; that the Absolute Being is immanent in the phenomenal Universe; and that the forces

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and laws of the phenomenal Universe are merely expressions of the agency and will of the Absolute Being.

It is important to notice here that if the evolutionist, while he can not deny but that these hypotheses may be true, does not admit the validity of the evidence in behalf of their truth, it is not in consequence of holding the theory of evolution. The theory of evolution does not touch these hypotheses at any conceivable point. A man may hold that theory to its fullest extent and in its most extreme form, and yet, in entire consistency, affirm every one of these hypotheses to be true. The only question thus far in regard to which there is a difference of opinion is a metaphysical one as to the possibility of our knowledge of the Absolute. Whether the theory of evolution is true or false, this question remains unaffected.

Taking up, then, these hypotheses, reserving the evidence of their truth for a while, and contemplating in imagination this primitive condition of the Universe, we find our

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selves in the presence of the original ὕλη (as the Greeks called it), or matter, in which are certain all-pervading forces and laws, which, upon our present supposition, are expressions of the agency and will of the Absolute Being.

It devolves upon us, at this point, to inquire what is the character of these forces, and what are the laws by which their operation in the Universe is governed? It is impossible, of course, to do more at this time than to state some of the principal forces and laws, and those upon which the evolutionist relies as the methods by which the developments of the Universe are evolved. With the advantage of the magnificent discoveries of science, we know something of these forces and laws, and we can see what would be the method and the results of their operation in the homogeneous mass we have supposed to be before us. There are certain primary truths through which these forces and laws are disclosed to us. Such are the "Persistence of Force," the "Continuity of Motion," and the "Indestructibility of Matter." The last two are necessarily de-

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rived from the first; for "*our experiences of matter and motion are resolvable into experiences of force.*" I am following Mr. Herbert Spencer in this enumeration of primary truths, as I shall follow him also in his application of them to the process of evolution, because I wish to show that the theory of evolution, as stated by its most renowned advocates, is not inconsistent with the belief in a Personal Creator.

And here let it be noticed that whatever else may be the result of a process of evolution, these laws are not. They precede and underlie all phenomena. They are eternal principles. They inevitably suggest an eternal mind, of which they are eternal ideas. And we seek in vain for a subject in which these eternal principles can inhere, if not in the Ultimate Reality, the Absolute Being, the existence of which, according to Mr. Spencer, we are compelled to acknowledge.

I have referred to force in the general, as including all forces, and under the general law of its persistence other numerous laws

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will group themselves. The most prominent result at first of the operation of these forces, in accordance with these laws, upon the homogeneous mass by which space is supposed to be filled, is to transform its homogeneous into a heterogeneous character. Lines of force striking a homogeneous mass, at different angles, and the motion of its particles necessarily following the direction of least resistance, will constitute a process of differentiation. We see the amazing and endless variety of the Universe begin. The play of these forces integrates enormous masses of matter. The process of integration is accompanied by that of segregation and equilibration. Groups, in a wonderful order, with vast intervals, move with inconceivable velocity through the abysses of space. Measureless periods of time roll away, and we behold the Stellar Universe, that Universe beneath the contemplation of which man trembles with the sense of his own nothingness, as he is overwhelmed with the splendor and majesty of this stupendous theatre for the development of life. As we stand

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at this point, in the marvelous process, what shall we think of Absolute Being, the existence of which we are compelled to acknowledge? Are we any less sure of the agency of this Being, any less certain that there are Reason and Will behind all phenomena, than we should be if we had seen shaping hands come forth from the darkness, and build up the stately constellations? Nay, are we not more profoundly impressed by the invisible and silent and immensely protracted and infinitely patient agency by which phenomena seem to come into being? And as the evolutionist recognizes the Absolute Being and its relationship to the phenomenal universe, and is filled with wonder and awe at the mystery of this rational development answering to, but infinitely surpassing, a reason of which he is conscious in himself, does not an almost irresistible impulse move him to a recognition of a Personal Being, and could any more reasonable utterance rise to his lips than this, "Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the

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foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Thine hands"!

Thus far we have witnessed but the mere prelude of that development which the Evolutionist claims has proceeded uninterruptedly in nature to the present time. We have seen that, up to this point, there is nothing in the theory, or the facts which support it, which conflicts with the idea of a Personal Being, from whom all this development proceeds, and by whom it is carried on. The only suggestion of difficulty, which is our alleged ignorance of the Absolute, is, as has already been said, a metaphysical difficulty, and is in no way the result of the theory of evolution.

Would it conflict at all with the idea of a Personal Creator, if it should be supposed that the process, having reached this point, is still continuous, and moves up into a higher sphere, presenting an entirely new class of phenomena? If a Personal God chooses that the works of His hands shall be evolved step by step, each link joined to the preceding in an endless chain, instead of breaking up the

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continuity from time to time and beginning anew, does he thereby obscure to us the fact of His existence? Does not the continuous process, which is, in effect, one uninterrupted series of acts of creation, testify, more clearly than a mere mechanical process, interrupted from time to time by special acts of creation, could possibly do, to an infinite Reason, which sees the end from the beginning?

Supposing this to be so, and that there would be rather gain than loss for the Theistic argument should it appear that the process of evolution is still continuous from inorganic to organic nature, we are prepared to consider the evidence to be offered that this is the case.

Suppose we still stand in imagination at the point we have already reached in the process of evolution. We presently behold a new phenomenon—that of life. It does not burst upon us suddenly in highly advanced organisms; we find it in the simplest possible forms. In bringing the process before our minds, we can of course avail ourselves only of the facts

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which are made known to us of that early period in the stratified history of our globe. These facts are few; the record is exceedingly imperfect; but, in connection with other facts, now accessible to us, they seem to indicate that the first appearance of life, supposing we had been witnesses of it, would not have seemed to us any interruption of a continuous order of development. One who sees crystalline formation, with its delicate shoots branching out on either side from a central axis, would not be conscious of any disturbance of an established order in the appearance of plants in the midst of what had hitherto been inorganic nature. In animal life, also, we reach a point where the transition from the inorganic would be almost imperceptible. In the *protogenes* of Haeckel we have, according to Mr. Spencer, "a type distinguishable from a fragment of albumen only by its finely granular character." There are certain remarkable facts also in this connection, recognized by scientific men, and appealed to by the evolutionist in support of his theory. For instance, the matter consti-

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tuting the living world is identical with that which forms the inorganic world. And what is still more remarkable is, that all the forces exerted in the living world are probably either identical with the forces of the inorganic world, or are convertible into them. Besides, organic nature is all the time built up out of inorganic nature, and returns into inorganic nature again. It may be said, indeed, by those who oppose this theory, that organic nature is inorganic nature plus life, and that the addition of life to nature is a new creation. But since we are supposing a divine act in every change of phenomena, how does it detract from the creative agency of God, if we affirm that through a certain arrangement of molecules life is developed, and plants or animals take their place in the boundless fields of nature? This process of evolution, through inconceivably complex conditions and incalculable periods of time, has resulted at last, according to the evolutionist, in the flora and fauna of the vegetable and animal kingdoms of the present time.

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We have thus passed in our survey of the history of phenomena from inorganic to organic being. Certainly no point has been reached where theist and evolutionist, whom we have thus placed in a temporary antithesis, need to separate. If life has at last appeared upon the stage of being, by a process of fine gradations, instead of by a sudden irruption of a new order of things, is there any reason why the theist should be disturbed? Is there any reason why he should hesitate, in the supposed interest of theology, to accept this as the truth in regard to the first appearance of life upon our globe? He can recognize the All-powerful One behind this process, just as well as he could, if he had seen a full-sized tree or animal start suddenly, and without any phenomenal antecedents, into being. And the evolutionist, still haunted by the presence of the inscrutable Power which lies back of all phenomena, and which he recognizes, waits to hear whether a knowledge of this power is accessible to other than the mere scientific faculties of the mind, and is as far as possible

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from the affirmation of the fool who "has said in his heart there is no God."

It is a part of my object, as I have already intimated, to present as fairly and strongly as I may be able to do, in the limits permitted me, the grounds upon which the doctrine of evolution rests and claims the acceptance of thinking men. It becomes desirable, therefore, at this point, to consider some of the laws and facts which exist in the animal world, and upon which the process of evolution is alleged to rest.

It is then, in the first place, a well-known law in nature that animal life constantly encroaches upon the means of subsistence, or, as stated scientifically, that animal life increases in a geometrical progression, while the means of subsistence increase only in an arithmetical progression. The inevitable consequence is, that a struggle for existence ensues, in which the more hardy and vigorous prevail, or, in the language generally used in this connection, there is a "survival of the fittest." Then comes in the law of Heredity, or the likeness

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of offspring to their parents, by which there is a tendency to the extension and perpetuation of the stronger and better qualities. Then there is the tendency to variation, under the influence of special surroundings and acquired habits. These variations are almost always in the line of advantage to the animal, and becoming stamped, as it were, upon the organism, are themselves transmissible by inheritance. There is, therefore, a constant uplifting of life, a movement from the simple to the complex, from the unit to the manifold.

There are, however, certain objections in regard to this theory, which we are bound at this point to consider, candidly weighing the replies which the evolutionist has made.

The theory of evolution supposes that life has been undergoing ceaseless variation from the very first period of its existence, yet some of its earliest forms survive to the present day, and it is doubtful whether there have been any specific changes within the periods of history. This is a difficulty which besets the theory in respect both to animal and vegetable

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life, and it may be well to consider it here for a moment in regard to both. The evolutionist meets it by the assertion of what he calls "persistence of type" in nature. With a tendency in organisms to indefinite variation, under the influence of external causes, there is also a tendency to adhere to the original type, and this tendency, under favorable circumstances, is able to persist through immense periods of time. It may be, also, the evolutionist can plausibly urge, that the whole period embraced in history is too short for perceptible changes in species of vegetable or animal life. Still further, it may be urged, there may be laws which restrain evolution in certain directions while permitting it in others. And last of all, the evolutionist may say to us that the more highly organized life is, the more stable it becomes, and that it now requires immensely more protracted periods to accomplish what we should call specific changes than was the case when organisms were generally less complex.

Another objection which has been urged

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against the theory of evolution is, that there is an absence, in the geologic record of life, of those fine gradations between what we call species, which might be expected to exist if all life had proceeded by development from one or a few primordial germs. But the evolutionist might reply that the theory of evolution does not necessarily suppose this development to have proceeded from one or a few original germs. The development may have proceeded from a vast number of original germs, and upon a vast number of parallel lines. This would account for the absence of fine gradations between different species of animal life. But besides this, the record of life on our globe is very imperfect. The smallest proportion possible of the life which has existed has left any trace behind. There are gaps and chasms everywhere in the record. The entire contents of strata of immense depth have been utterly destroyed. Now, if we suppose that no such destruction of organic remains had taken place, who can say but that these gaps and chasms would be found to

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be filled up, and that we should behold a record of all the various forms of animal life, blending by imperceptible gradations into each other? But while such a development of life has been everywhere and at all times interrupted and arrested, there are preserved, here and there, traces of the links by which various species were united. The fossiliferous strata present not a few of what are called intercalary forms filling up the gaps between different species, and suggesting to the thoughtful mind the missing characters which have disappeared from the record.

It has also been urged against the theory that no instance has ever been known of one species passing into another, and that therefore the doctrine of the transmutation of species, which is involved in this theory, is destitute of foundation. The answer which is made to this objection is that the evolution is not supposed to be lateral, that is, from what we call one species to another already existing species, but that it is uniformly in the line of the gradual improvement of species. Thus,

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even within the historical period, in which the time for such developments has been so brief, we find such an advance as to constitute, on any accepted principle of classification, a new species. The order *columbæ* is, as is well known, a notable instance of this. There is nothing better understood by naturalists than the ease with which variations are established and transmitted in the pigeon tribe. With such an indication of a tendency in nature to permanent and rapidly increasing variation, it is difficult to resist the conclusion that sufficiently protracted periods of time, with the inevitable struggle for existence, and the fact of the transmission of acquired peculiarities, may be sufficient to account for all the varied development of life.

There is a remarkable passage in Coleridge's *Aids to Reflection*, in which that profound philosopher anticipates, by a sort of insight into nature, the discoveries of the last few years, as to the ascending evolution of life. He says, "Every rank of creatures, as it ascends in the scale of creation, leaves death

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behind it or under it. The metal, at its height of being, seems a mute prophecy of the coming vegetation, into a mimic semblance of which it crystallizes. The blossom and flower, the acme of vegetable life, divides into correspondent organs with reciprocal functions, and by instinctive motions and approximations seems impatient of that fixure by which it is differenced in kind from the flower-shaped Psyche that flutters with free wing above it. And wonderfully, in the insect realm, doth the irritability, the proper seat of instinct, while yet the nascent sensibility is subordinated thereto—most wonderfully, I say, doth the muscular life in the insect, and the musco-arterial in the bird, imitate and typically rehearse the adaptive understanding, yea, and the moral affections and charities of man. Let us carry ourselves back, in spirit, to the mysterious week, the teeming work-days of the Creator, as they rose in vision before the eye of the inspired historian, of *the generations of the heavens and of the earth, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the*

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heavens. And who that hath watched their ways with an understanding heart could, as the vision evolving still advanced toward him, contemplate the filial and loyal Bee; the home-building, wedded and divorceless Swallow; and above all, the manifoldly intelligent Ant tribes, with their commonwealths and confederacies, their warriors and miners, the husband folk, that fold in their tiny flocks on the honeyed leaf, and the virgin sisters, with the holy instincts of maternal love, detached, and in selfless purity—and not say to himself, Behold the shadow of approaching humanity, the sun rising from behind, in the kindling morn of creation. Thus all lower natures find their highest good in semblances and seekings of that which is higher and better. All things strive to ascend, and ascend in their striving."

When we thus contemplate nature, the very fact of its wonderful order, and its universal subordination to law, only makes it seem to us all the more instinct with a divine life. The evolutionist, in the presence of this ra-

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tional development, can utter no reasonable protest, if we exclaim—

> "God of the Granite and the Rose!
> Soul of the Sparrow and the Bee!
> The mighty tide of Being flows
> Through countless channels, Lord, from Thee.
> It leaps to life in grass and flowers,
> Through every grade of being runs;
> While from Creation's radiant towers,
> Its glory flames in Stars and Suns."

The difficulty culminates, however, as we reach that point in the process where man appears. I wish to speak here with the utmost care, lest I should be misunderstood. The theory which involves man in this process of evolution, whether as regards his body alone, or both the body and the soul, is inconsistent with the interpretation of the Scriptural account of the origin of man, which I, in common with other believers in Christianity, have received. I confess to very great reluctance to having that interpretation revised. I am by no means prepared to admit that a process of evolution, including man, is as yet so thoroughly established as to render it cer-

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tain that this interpretation must be modified. But I remember that previous interpretations of the same class of subjects have been modified, and even abandoned, and yet the great historical faith of the Church has survived unimpaired. I recognize the fact, so plainly disclosed in history, that true interpretation of the Scriptures has been largely dependent upon scientific progress. I believe the investigation of nature to be one of the means by which the Holy Spirit leads us into all truth. I do not dare, therefore, to affirm that my interpretation of the Scriptures on this point is a finality, connected as it is only indirectly by a logical process with any article of the faith. I can not venture to subject the faith itself to the stress and strain which should be borne by my fallible interpretation alone. I must be open, therefore, to any truth which God may teach in nature, in response to human inquiry; and faith should be strong enough for a full assurance that all such truth will lead to more glorious views of God, and of that salvation which He has provided for mankind.

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It is not necessarily involved in my subject to consider the possible reconciliation of the Scriptural account of the origin of man with the theory of evolution. But the possibility of such a reconciliation, should the theory be established, is so important, and so closely connected with the purpose which I have in view, that I will not evade the difficulty, nor shun the delicate task of its consideration.

It will be well for us then to remember, lest our apprehensions should be unduly excited, that the interpretation in question has never had the sanction of the Church, nor of the entire body of Christian teachers. St. George Mivart has shown conclusively that a theory of evolution was held by some of the most distinguished of the Christian philosophers of the period of the schoolmen. In fact, it is not at all certain but that the interpretation in question is itself the result of the imperfect science of earlier periods, and that the mischief, in this respect, which science has done, science has now to repair.

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Let us understand clearly the difficulty we are to meet here. It is not the question of the existence of a Personal God. That question is not involved, in any special sense, in the origin of man. It is not the question of the freedom of the will and moral accountability. There is nothing in the theory of a process of evolution inconsistent with the arrival of being, at some point, to all that which is involved in the moral attributes of man. The question is not mainly whether the Scriptural account of this matter is to be understood literally, or is an account cast in a poetic form. The account itself, in the indiscriminate use in it of Hebrew words signifying to create and to make, as well as in other respects, affords indications that it was not intended to be cast in a mould of rigid scientific accuracy. Neither Christianity nor the claims of God's word would be compromised, even if the Mosaic account should be proved to be an Oriental allegory, teaching important truth under poetical forms. The real difficulty here encountered is in regard to the fall of man, which is a funda-

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mental fact in historical Christianity. At first view, it seems entirely inconsistent with the theory of evolution. That presents to us, apparently, an uninterrupted progress towards a higher and better condition. What place is there, then, in the process, for such a fact as the fall?

In answering this question, we are led to the consideration of a peculiarity, in this process, which has attracted the attention of scientific men. This peculiarity has been described as an occasional blundering or blind groping of nature. There seem to be tentative movements in nature. There are failures and positive degenerations. There is a tendency to variation, not only in the direction of advantage and progress, but of arrested development and deterioration. This fact, about which there is no dispute, has been thought by some to furnish an argument against design in nature. There is a sufficient reply to that suggestion, but its consideration does not come now within our province. The use which I wish now to make of it is as an indi-

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cation in the lower physical order of what takes place in the higher moral realm of nature.

There is then a tendency to degeneration, as well as to progress, in nature. If the theory of evolution is true, the same law will manifest itself in the moral order. And what is the fall of man but that fact in the moral order, of which we have a prophecy in the deteriorations of the physical world!

It will be wise in us to watch carefully the progress of investigation in this respect. The results already reached are certainly not of a character to be set lightly aside. The indications, in embryology, of the links between man and the lower orders of animal life; the foreshadowing of human sentiment and emotion in the passions of the brute creation; the startling suggestion which obtrudes itself, as we study nature, that certain habits in man may be the transmitted results of habits acquired all along that line of organic development, through which humanity has been built up from the dust of the earth; the wonderful

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fact that the book of Genesis itself groups man with the lower orders of animal life in the last period of creation; all these considerations should be thoughtfully and candidly weighed. I am perfectly aware of the strength of the arguments which are urged against these considerations on strictly scientific grounds. One eminent man has not long since passed away, who, with the highest scientific reputation, was a conspicuous opponent of these views. I need not dwell upon the position, in this respect, of Professor Agassiz. This community will have the opportunity, within the next fortnight, of listening to a full exposition of this subject, from one of our most distinguished scholars and divines, the Rev. Dr. Osgood. But it is a significant fact that Professor Agassiz leaves scarcely any successor, in the higher walks of science, to his opinions upon the subject of evolution. The apparent inevitableness of the drift of scientific opinion in the direction of this theory can hardly be appreciated by any one who is not familiar with the principles of

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scientific investigation. A discovery, which, to men generally, would have little significance, is, to the intellect trained in scientific methods, full of suggestiveness as to the plan of nature. The unanimity among scientific men with which these discoveries are regarded as pointing in one general direction, and demanding an interpretation of nature upon the hypothesis of evolution, is something very remarkable, and should receive the serious consideration of at least every educated Christian man. It is the solemn duty of the Christian world, in view of what may ere long be universally accepted scientific opinions, to give its best thought to the discrimination which may be made between interpretations of certain portions of the Scriptures and the essential facts and truths of the Christian faith.

Professor Agassiz, while opposing the theory of evolution, planted himself firmly, in one respect, upon a foundation from which it was impossible for him, by any scientifi conclusions, to be removed. He claimed to recog-

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nize everywhere in nature the thought of God. Science, within the self-appointed limits of the investigation of phenomena, and the laws of their sequence, can never disturb this position; for it lies outside of phenomena, and is affirmed by faculties higher than the mere scientific faculties of the mind. The evolutionist, who does not recognize any thing outside of phenomena as constituting a part of his philosophical system, can take no exception to this, any more than to the other hypotheses which we have made. We, as theists, have gone with the evolutionist all along through the history of phenomenal being. We do not venture to say but that all he claims as to the order and method of the development of nature may be true. We hold him, also, at this point, to these admissions: that there is Absolute Being back of all phenomena, and that, in the absence of any possible knowledge of this Being, the hypothesis that it is a Personal Being, who has constructed nature upon a rational plan, the features of which we can

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trace in the phenomenal Universe, is, at least, as reasonable as any other.

But we are now prepared to go further. We have kept common ground, so far. Now we affirm that the position of nescience, in regard to Absolute Being, is untenable, and that there are satisfactory and conclusive considerations which should carry the mere scientific investigator with us, when we affirm the truth of the hypotheses which we have made. It is in vain to claim that we know nothing of Absolute Being. We assert for ourselves some knowledge of it when we affirm that it exists. If, then, personality be denied to it, that is a still further claim to knowledge; for on what possible ground can the absence of personality be affirmed of a Being of whom nothing is known? It is, however, no more than fair to notice the fact that there are certain grounds upon which the personality of Absolute Being is denied. But it must be remembered that the whole discussion is now transferred to the realm of metaphysics, and the man of science abandons here the peculiar

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prestige which belongs to him in the scientific field. From the moment that he penetrates beyond the molecule, where matter vanishes from any test to which he can subject it, all through the supposed atomic constitution of matter, back to Absolute Being, he is traveling in the realm of metaphysics. In the realm, then, of metaphysics, we would meet this affirmation of nescience, in regard to Absolute Being, and this consequent skepticism as to its personality.

Since there is nothing in mere personality, that is, in the conscious possession of intellect and will, which is inconsistent with Absolute Being, the grounds for its denial must be sought indirectly and outside of the mere existence of Absolute Being. It is accordingly affirmed that the idea of Absolute Being excludes all relation, and that therefore we can not conceive of the Absolute Being as cause and the Universe as effect, or of any idea of Absolute Being, and a phenomenal Universe, except the pantheistic idea, which makes God to be all things and all things to

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be God. This position overlooks the distinction, which evidently should be made, between an Absolute Being, which can not hold any relation to a phenomenal Universe and an Absolute Being, which, while no such relation necessarily exists, can hold it at its will.

It is conceivable, then, that Absolute and Unconditioned Being may hold relations at its will. It can conceivably project an object of which it is the subject. It can make itself the cause of which the Universe is the effect. Is there, then, a Personal Being back of all the phenomena of nature? I reply, that an affirmative is at least as reasonable, by the admission of all, as a negative answer; and that since a voluntary relativity is conceivable in Absolute Being, there are such indications of reason and will in nature as to make it violently unreasonable to deny that the rationality of the Universe is owing to the will of a rational and consequently personal Absolute Being.

A question comes up at this point in the discussion, which it is important for us to con-

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sider. Absolute Being back of all phenomena is admitted in this controversy; but although much is affirmed on one side as well as the other in regard to it, it is claimed that "it is something which lies outside of the range of our knowledge." This necessarily suggests the question, what knowledge is possible to us; whether, in other words, it is possible for us to know any thing otherwise than by the faculties employed in scientific investigation. I can not, of course, enter here upon the discussion of so great a subject. I can only indicate the sure and safe ground which the Christian philosopher can take. We need to take our stand upon the higher spiritual philosophy, that of Plato, and Leibnitz, and Kant, and Coleridge; affirming the distinction between the reason and the understanding, and claiming an intuitional power in reason as the basis of our higher knowledge. I am not insensible to the dangers of the transcendental philosophy, but I can not express too strongly my sense of the importance of familiarity, on the part, especially of Christian ministers, with the

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general principles of the philosophy of the great world-teachers to whom I have referred. Blaise Pascal has given the highest expression of this philosophy in a wonderful passage, in which he says, "Divine things are infinitely above nature, and God only can place them in the soul. He has designed that they should pass, not from the head into the heart, but from the heart into the head. And so, as it is necessary to know human things in order to love them, it is necessary to love divine things in order to know them." The great Dante also has beautifully and profoundly stated the attitude of this philosophy in regard to the knowledge of God:

> "Lume è lassù che visibile face
> Lo creatore a quella creatura—
> Che solo in lui vedere ha la sua pace."

"There is above a light which makes visible the Creator to that creature who finds his peace only in the vision of Him."

Before closing what I have to say, there are one or two points to which I wish for a moment to refer. I have, in this lecture, placed

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those who hold the doctrine of evolution in the position of those who are not prepared to take distinctively theistic ground. This I have done, as must have been perceived, only for the temporary purposes of my argument. But having done this, I feel that they ought in all fairness to be allowed to speak for themselves on this point, and I therefore quote a passage from the works of Mr. Darwin, one of the most distinguished representatives of this school:

"There is a grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having been originally breathed by the Creator into a few forms or into one; and that, whilst this planet has gone cycling on, according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning, endless forms, most beautiful and most wonderful, have been and are being evolved."

Another point to which I would refer is the charge of materialism, which is made very generally against men of science at the present day. That there are some, especially in Germany, who are justly chargeable with materi-

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alism, in the worst sense of the term, I have no doubt. There are some probably in England who are liable to the same charge, but I should not include among them the recognized leaders of scientific thought. The scientific investigations of the last few years have modified the character of materialistic philosophy. All scientific men at the present day believe in the atomic constitution of what we call matter; but so far as they know—and the leaders among them unhesitatingly admit it—the ultimate atoms of matter may be only force-centres, and therefore what we understand as spiritual entities. I am not insensible to the dangerous character of prevalent materialistic views as to the freedom of the will and other closely related subjects; but I do not hesitate to say that the materialism of which I have just spoken, that which indissolubly associates life and force with what we call matter, and which is as ready to express the facts of nature in terms of spirit as of matter, is not a dangerous materialism, and is, just as much as the ideal-

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ism of Bishop Berkeley, consistent with the Christian faith.

I wish also to say that in whatever concessions I may have made to the theory of evolution, I am not to be understood as an advocate of any view which separates God, at any moment, from the phenomenal universe. The idea of the exercise of creative power, at the initiation of each species of life, does exclude God, to some degree certainly, from the intermediate periods. My view recognizes God as the First Great Cause, and beholds His working and immediate agency in every minutest change in the phenomenal universe. What is true of man is true of all existence: "In Him we live and move and have our being."

There is one more point to be considered. If there be such a process of evolution, what may we anticipate as its end? Is it to go on until there are beings as far above man as he is above the lower orders of animal life? In answering these questions, we shall be aided by what is a scientific conception, and that is, that if the phenomenal universe has proceeded

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from Absolute Being, to Absolute Being it will return. But this is just what is presented to us in the fundamental facts and principles of the Christian faith. The tide of being which has flowed from God, and culminated at last in man, must return to God. This it does in the Incarnation, by which man is united to God, and God to man. The circle from Absolute Being back to Absolute Being is complete. Those who are familiar with nature, and see how one thing answers to another, and all things seek harmony and symmetry and completeness, will recognize the presence of a universal law in this linking together of man, as the final result of development, with God, in Christ. Christ then stands as the highest and final expression of this evolution, evolved from the bosom of humanity and yet coming forth also from the being of God. He is the highest expression of which the process is capable. It ends with Christ in God.

I have now completed the manifestly difficult and delicate task assigned me. Every word which I have spoken has been inspired

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by an earnest desire to do what I could to allay apprehensions which have been excited by the supposed attitude of science toward natural and revealed religion. If the doctrine of successive and intermitted acts of creation should finally be abandoned, it will be replaced by a far higher conception of God, according to which every phenomenal change depends upon what is virtually a creative act, and the inconceivably vast development of nature springs forth at every point of space and every moment of time from God. The last thing in regard to which any fear need be entertained is the future of the historical faith of the Christian Church.

A poet of our time has represented Christianity in the likeness of a majestic angel, with helmet and sword, vainly attempting, in the presence of the Sphinx, to answer the problem of human destiny. The helmet falls from her head, and the sword from her hand, and she stands mute and powerless. The future, we may rest assured, will reverse the representation. The helmet will rest upon

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the calm and serene brow of the angel; the sword will be held in her invincible hand, and the answer will be given which solves the mystery of our being. Science has reached a point in its investigations where it will become more reverent. The Absolute Being which it already recognizes will be seen to be the Personal Creator and Governor of the Universe. The interpretation of nature will be more thorough and clear, and the testimony to the Infinite Being, the Moral Governor of the World, will be so overwhelming and decisive that there will be a universal acknowledgment that

"Earth with her thousand voices praises God."

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DANTE.

THE foremost figure in the age in which he lived, and standing in the front rank of the great men of all time, is the Florentine poet, Dante. His greatness, like that of all world-teachers, lies in the clearness with which he discerned the true spirit and want of his age, and the accuracy with which he seized upon and applied universal principles to the problems which his own country and times presented. This kind of greatness is immeasurably superior to that of the poet who merely delights us with flights of imagination and exquisite refinement of style, for it is a greatness which addresses itself to all ages, and gives him who possesses it imperishable power over the thoughts and wills of men. Among those

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upon whom this gift of greatness is bestowed, Dante, I think, takes rank at once with Homer and Shakespeare and Goethe.

In order to estimate aright the position and influence of Dante, in the world's history, the first requisite is to obtain a clear insight into the special aspects of the age in which he lived, and see the form in which it presented the universal problems of life.

The middle of the thirteenth century, the period of Dante's birth, was coeval with the life of the last of the schoolmen. Anselm, Duns Scotus, Bonaventura, Bernard, Thomas Aquinas, Abelard, had all built up their vast systems of thought, and now William of Ockham, the political schoolman, the last of his race, held the listening ear of the world. It would be vain to deny the extraordinary intellectual ability of the schoolmen. The grand difficulty of their systems is that they led to no practical results. Occupied with almost infinite subtleties, they never even attempted to grasp the mighty questions urged by the onward-moving ages of the world. They had

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paralyzed thought, and arrested it in its mighty progress. And the man who was to meet the wants of the age had the herculean task before him of breaking down the authority of these gigantic systems, and liberating thought from the shackles by which it was bound.

It was an age not only of intellectual stagnation, but also of moral and spiritual despotism. The Inquisition then moved through society with stealthy, treacherous step, and smote with cruel hand. It was the ubiquitous agent of the tyranny of the Papacy. No deviation from the iron uniformity of the dogmas of the Romish Church was permitted. A man might as well have leprosy as to be suspected of being a heretic. There were indeed rebellions against this monstrous usurpation over the soul. The Waldenses and other anti-sacerdotal sects anticipated many of the principles of the great Reformation, but they were hunted like wild beasts, and lived in dens and caves of the earth. There is a mystery about the strange history of the magnificent Order

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of the Templars, which probably will never be solved; but the sudden destruction which fell upon them in every country where the papal sway was known, the utter absence of valid evidence of the frightful crimes with which they were charged, the blameless lives for which many of them were renowned, and the heroic fortitude with which they met the most awful and protracted tortures, and finally death itself, rather than confess their guilt, have led some to the conclusion that Du Molay and his princely followers were associated in one vast combination against the claims of the Papacy. It has even been asserted that in this combination Dante had a part. However this may be, no giant oak, lifting itself with all its spreading foliage into the free, bright sky, was ever smitten more suddenly or more utterly prostrated by the lightning's flash, than was this splendid military order stricken and overwhelmed by the united power of Charles of France and Clement of Avignon. Under this overshadowing despotism, which hung like a malarious atmosphere over the

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soul, there could be no progress of spiritual ideas. The moral world sank into a dreamy apathy, spell-bound by the dregs of that cup of sorceries which all were compelled to drain.

These influences of the times produced a peculiar type of moral character which has found expression in the cynical, sarcastic, and vindictive tone of the Italian proverb. Take the common Venetian proverb, "First Venetian, then Christian;" then another, "The people murder one another, the princes embrace one another;" then there are such as these, "Who serves at court, dies on straw;" "An open countenance, but close thoughts;" "Make yourself honey, and the flies will devour you." Some of them suggest the impulsive, generous character which has survived the debasing influences of the times: "Friends tie their purse with a cobweb's thread;" "The lover of all hangs every door with May." Most of them, however, had their origin in the fierce feuds which raged between families and republics, as when, according to Machiavelli,

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Rinaldo Albizzi was banished by Cosmo de' Medici, and the exile sent Cosmo a threat in the proverb, "The hen is brooding," but the unterrified De' Medici retorted with another, taunting the exile with his banishment, "There is no brooding out of the nest."

One of these proverbs, so significant of national character, has been immortalized by Dante, and is touchingly connected with the life of Milton. In one of the family quarrels, so characteristic of that period, it was resolved by one of the families that the death of a young cavalier connected with the other could alone atone for an injury which had been done. The consequences, however, were likely to be so terrible that they hesitated. At length, Moscha Lamberti suddenly rising, exclaimed, "Those who consider every thing, conclude nothing;" and added, "A deed done has an end." These proverbs precipitated the fatal act, and for centuries were remembered as the cause of the strife between Ghibellines and Guelphs. In the Inferno, Dante meets with Moscha, and thus describes him:

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"Then one
Maimed of each hand, uplifted in the gloom
The bleeding stumps, that they with gory spots
Sullied his face, and cried, 'Remember that
Of Moscha too'— I who, alas! exclaimed,
'The deed once done, there is an end,' that proved
A seed of sorrow to the Tuscan race."

Long afterwards, when Milton was writing his celebrated "Defence of the People," and was warned that it would end in blindness, he persevered and concluded the work, exclaiming, in the words of the Italian proverb, "The deed once done, there is an end."

One striking feature of this age was its strange and extravagant fanaticism, not indeed altogether inexplicable, for it was the assertion, in forms of the wildest excitement, of that liberty which was everywhere repressed. Some sudden impulse would seize whole communities, without apparent cause, and sweep them like a whirlwind until exhausted by its own fury. Now it was the frantic protest of humanity against the enormous iniquity of the times, in the self-inflicted scourgings of thousands, and thus on the highways and in the

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towns and cities of Italy and France, the strange infatuation spread like wildfire, until vast armies of men and women might be seen lashing their torn and bleeding flesh, and howling with the torture inflicted by their own hand. Again, without apparent motive or concert of action, immense numbers of men, women, and children began to move towards Rome. The roads and villages were crowded with the swarming hordes, and the sacred city was threatened with famine. With no purpose accomplished or to be accomplished, the vast migration disappeared as mysteriously as it came. And still again there suddenly arose a movement of the peasantry of France—the Pastoureaux, under the impulse of some vague democratic ideas, led by that strange personage, the Master of Hungary, sweeping on and taking possession of towns and cities. It was the far-off rumbling and shaking of the earth which preceded the volcanic burst of the French Revolution. Very significant indications were these, if men had

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but understood them, of something fearfully wrong in the system of things.

Consider then the character of some of the representative men of that time. The principal pontiff, in the age of Dante, was Boniface VIII. Not even Hildebrand or Innocent III. had made such extravagant claims for the Papacy as he. And it is remarkable that the Pope, who arrogated to himself the highest spiritual and temporal power, is the one most execrated for the wickedness of his life. There is scarcely any crime with which Boniface was not charged by his contemporaries. He was even accused of blasphemy and open and avowed infidelity and atheism. The accounts of his death are conflicting, but one account is that he dashed out his brains against a wall, in rage at finding himself a prisoner. It is a terrible indication of the demoralization of the times that such a story in regard to the successor of St. Peter could be commonly supposed to be true.

But in the century which we are considering, there was one character of almost peerless

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beauty and excellence, and that was the royal St. Louis of France. Gentle and yet firm; devoted to the Church, and yet singularly free from superstition; eminently devout, and yet shrewd and statesmanlike in affairs; of high courage and lofty principles of honor, and intense devotion to duty, he was one of the great redeeming features of the age in which he lived. As we look back upon the men and the scenes of that time, we gaze as it were upon dark and frowning crags and gloomy caverns, and many a deep, unfathomable abyss, but amid them all there rises at least one mountain form, clothed with the pure white snow, the spotless raiment of heaven, standing upon the earth's immovable foundations, its head lifted to the skies and encircled with a crown of rosy light.

In this strange, restless, transition period in history, Dante appears. Of one thing we may be sure, that if he has any message for his age, which it must hear for its own good, he shall suffer crucifixion for it. The man who draws water from the deep wells of truth

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for thirsty souls, cannot be permitted to refresh himself with the cooling draught. Let a man undertake to teach the world around him some principle to which it has not yet arisen, and he shall be reviled and persecuted. Nay, man cannot bestow the gift of heavenly peace upon his fellow-men except by tearing it first from his own bosom. This is the universal law, and if Dante has a mission in his age, he shall have bitterness also.

This began to be very soon apparent. There were a depth, intensity, and earnestness about the boy that portended a life of terrible reality. His first experiences of disappointment, however, were in love; a kind of sorrow which does not elicit much sympathy, and which most men contrive to survive. At nine years of age, he meets Beatrice, the daughter of Folco Portinari. The effect produced upon him is extraordinary. There is but one single interview at this time, but he continues for years to dream of nothing else and think of nothing else but Beatrice. Nine years pass away before he sees her again; and

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then he meets her accidentally in the street, when she turns upon him, as he says, a look of ineffable tenderness and passes on. At this particular point in his career, he is so impressed with her angelic innocence and excellence that he does not even mention her name—feeling himself, of course, unworthy to do so. This particular policy, however, he unfortunately carries a little too far; for in order the better to conceal a love which he feels that he is unworthy to entertain, he writes very creditable verses in praise of another lady, and Beatrice, learning this fact, the next time she meets him in the street, passes him without recognition, marries Limone de' Bardi, and dies a year or two afterward.

This is absolutely all that makes up the story of the love of Dante and Beatrice, and yet Dante has immortalized it. I suppose the fact is that the child Beatrice, a fair, bright girl of eight years of age, did make a deep impression upon the intense and earnest soul of the youthful Dante. This impression, made resplendent by his imagination, is reproduced

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in his great poem, and forms the prominent feature in it. There is a passage in his Vita Nuova in which he gives an account of his love for Beatrice, and which shows that the Beatrice of the Vita Nuova and the Divina Commedia are the same person. He says, "Soon after this, a wonderful vision appeared to me, in which I saw things which made me purpose to speak no more of this blessed one until I could more worthily treat of her. And to attain to this, I study to the utmost of my power, as she truly knoweth. So that if it shall please Him through whom all things live, that my life be prolonged for some years, I hope to speak of her as never was spoken of any woman. And then may it please Him who is the Lord of Grace that my soul may go to behold the glory of its lady, the blessed Beatrice, who in glory looks upon the face of Him who is blessed forever."

At the time when Dante entered upon manhood, the old feud of the Middle Ages between Guelphs and Ghibellines was raging in Italy. The form which this contest assumed

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in the early part of Dante's life was that of a struggle between the free municipalities represented by the Guelphs and the aristocracy represented by the Ghibellines. Dante was a Guelph. His instincts all led him to the party of freedom and progress. He was in exile for a time, during the temporary occupation of Florence by the Ghibellines. But just at this period there was a change in the character and relations of these two parties. The Guelph came to represent the papal, and the Ghibelline the imperial power. The Guelph party became therefore the exponent of superstition, spiritual despotism, and stationary civilization; the Ghibelline of national rights, freedom of thought, and the progress of the race.

With these ideas, he soon exercised a commanding influence in Florence, and at the age of thirty-five was elected one of the Priori, or chief officers of the city. Shortly after, having been sent as an ambassador to Rome, Boniface VIII., with his characteristic treachery, called the Guelph Charles

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de Valois to take possession of Florence, and drive out the principal Ghibellines. Dante was startled from his fancied security to find himself a life-long exile from the glorious city which gave him birth, and the beautiful banks of the Arno, on which his childhood and youth were passed. His first exclamation became the battle-cry of the Ghibellines: "Florence we must recover; Florence for Italy, and Italy for the world."

It is not necessary to follow in detail the various fortunes of Dante's exile. He was a wanderer among the castles and monasteries of Italy, his acknowledged greatness and his accomplishments making him everywhere a welcome guest.

The fiery soul of Dante raged within him at the corruption and anarchy of the times. Before his exile he had conceived the idea of the Divina Commedia, and had made some progress in its execution. Now he resumed the undertaking, and with a power tenfold intensified by his poverty and exile, he poured his red-hot thoughts into his work. Portions

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of it were given to the world from time to time, and so deep and terrible was the impression which it made even in his own day, that men whispered with awe, as he passed by, "There is the man that has been in Hell."

It is said that the hermits of St. Augustine, in the monastery of Santa Croce del Corvo, on the shore of the Gulf of Spezzia, saw one day a stranger, of sad aspect, bowed down, as if with sorrow, standing upon the summit of Monte Caporione, and gazing at the entrancing loveliness of the scene. One of the monks approached and addressed him, but he made no reply. On speaking to him again, and asking him what he wished, Dante—for it was he—turned sadly and answered only, "Peace."

His hopes of Italian restoration were revived by the accession of Henry of Luxemburg as Emperor of Germany, and his campaign in Italy; but these hopes were destined to speedy disappointment by the adverse fortune of Henry and his early death.

He once had the opportunity of return from exile offered him, but it was coupled with

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humiliating conditions, and was haughtily refused.

In the Paradiso, he describes his great ancestor as predicting his exile:

> "Thou shalt leave each thing
> Beloved most dearly: this is the first shaft
> Shot from the bow of exile. Thou shalt prove
> How salt the savor is of others' bread;
> How hard the passage to descend and climb
> By others' stairs."

In another work, he says: "I have pity for all unhappy ones; but most for those, whosoever they are, who languish in exile, and visit their country only in dreams." In his Convito, he says: "It has been the pleasure of Florence, the beautiful city, the famous daughter of Rome, to reject me from her sweet bosom, where I was born, where I grew to middle life, and where, if it may please her, I wish, from my heart, to end the time which yet remains to me, and then to rest there my worn-out spirit. Throughout almost all parts where our language is spoken, a wanderer, well-nigh a beggar, I have gone, showing, against my

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will, the wounds of fortune. Truly I have been a vessel without sail or rudder, driven to diverse ports and shores by that hot blast, the breath of grievous poverty."

Amid incessant effort for the liberty of his native land and for the welfare of mankind, Dante was taken ill at Ravenna, and died on the 14th September, 1321, at the age of fifty-six years.

At his own wish, he was robed as a Franciscan friar, a golden lyre, with broken chords, was laid at his feet, and his hands were placed upon the open Scriptures resting on his breast. Over his remains a monument was erected, on which is inscribed, "Sepulchrum Dantis poetæ," and also these lines:

"The rights of monarchy, the heavens, the stream of fire, the pit,
In vision seen, I sang as far as to the fates seemed fit,
But since my soul, an alien here, hath flown to nobler wars,
And, happier now, hath gone to seek its Maker 'mid the stars,
Here am I, Dante, shut, exiled from the ancestral shore,
Whom Florence, the of all least loving mother bore."

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The great work from which the imperishable power of Dante proceeds is the Divina Commedia. As presenting his philosophical, political, and religious opinions, as well as his poetic genius, I shall briefly consider it. No other poem has so much of *thought* in it. It is an epitome of all the learning of the world. Ancient mythology and the myths of more modern times are there. The old world's philosophy and religion, and those also of the new age, are there. There are ancient history, and the history of the middle ages, as well as of Dante's own time. There are innumerable sketches of character, and isolated pictures and histories. There are poems within poems, an allegorical and spiritual sense running on within the literal representation. A whole system of intellectual science and of mystic theology is blended with the vast scheme of political reconstruction which he proposed.

Dante founded his poem upon the prevalent conceptions of his time in regard to the unseen world. It was divided, according to the popular idea and the teaching of the Papal

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Church, into three great departments—Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise. These the poet visits under the guidance of Virgil, and subsequently of Beatrice. The Inferno is a vast hollow cone, the apex of which is at the centre of the earth, and the base, about four thousand miles in circumference, just beneath the surface. The three divisions of the Inferno are separated by wide spaces. The sins which are punished in the first are those of incontinence, including the wanton, the gluttinous, the avaricious and prodigal, the irascible and the sullen. Those punished in the second are those of malice, including the violent against their neighbor, the violent against themselves, the violent against God, or Nature, the daughter of God, or Art, the daughter of Nature. The sins punished in the third are those of bestiality, including seducers, flatterers, simoniacs, soothsayers, barrators, hypocrites, thieves, evil counsellors, schismatics, falsifiers; and, in a second subdivision, traitors to their kindred, traitors to their country, traitors to

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their friends, traitors to their lords and benefactors.

As a specimen of the style of the Inferno, I quote the scene of Ugolino, who was betrayed by Ruggieri, and with his three sons was imprisoned in a tower. The key of the tower was thrown into the Arno, and the prisoners died of starvation. Dante says that in hell, he

". . . beheld two frozen in one hole,
So that one head a hood was to the other;
And even as bread through hunger is devoured,
The uppermost on the other set his teeth,
There where the brain is to the nape united."

At the inquiry of Dante as to who he was,

"His mouth uplifted from his grim repast,
That sinner, wiping it upon the hair
Of the same head that he behind had wasted.
Then he began: 'Thou wilt that I renew
The desperate grief which wrings my heart already
To think of only, ere I speak of it;
. . . . . the hour drew nigh
At which our food used to be brought to us,
And through his dream was each one apprehensive;
And I heard locking up the under door

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Of the horrible tower; whereat without a word
I gazed into the faces of my sons.
I wept not, I within so turned to stone;
They wept; and darling little Anselm mine
Said: 'Thou dost gaze so, father, what doth ail thee?'
Still not a tear I shed, nor answer made
All of that day, nor yet the night thereafter,
Until the sun rose on the world.
As now a little glimmer made its way
Into the dolorous prison, and I saw
Upon four faces my own very aspect,
Both of my hands in agony I bit;
And, thinking that I did it from desire
Of eating, on a sudden they uprose,
And said they: 'Father, much less pain 'twill give us
If thou do eat of us; thyself didst clothe us
With this poor flesh, and do thou strip it off.'
I calmed me then, not to make them more sad.
That day we all were silent, and the next.
Ah! obdurate earth, wherefore didst thou not open?
When we had come unto the fourth day, Gaddo
Threw himself down outstretched before my feet,
Saying, 'My father, why dost thou not help me?'
And there he died; and, as thou seest me,
I saw the three fall one by one, between
The fifth day and the sixth; whence I betook me,
Already blind, to groping over each,
And three days called them after they were dead;
Then hunger did what sorrow could not do."

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The Purgatorio rises, a mighty cone, from the Southern Ocean, antipodal to Mount Zion, at Jerusalem. Around it run seven terraces, on which the seven deadly sins are punished; and on the summit is the terrestrial Paradise. The seven circles are those of Pride, Envy, Anger, Sloth, Avarice and Prodigality, Gluttony and Lust. There is also a threefold division of the poem; the first describes the region outside the gate of Purgatory, the second the seven circles, and the third the terrestrial Paradise.

In the Purgatorio, there is an exquisite paraphrase of the Lord's Prayer, which may be taken as a specimen of its style:

'Our Father, thou who dwellest in the heavens,
Not circumscribed, but from the greater love
Thou bearest to the first effects on high,
Praised be thy name and thine omnipotence
By every creature, as befitting is
To render thanks to thy sweet effluence.
Come unto us the peace of thy dominion,
For unto it we cannot of ourselves,
If it come not, with all our intellect.
Even as thine own Angels of their will

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Make sacrifice to thee, Hosanna singing,
So may all men make sacrifice of theirs.
Give unto us this day our daily manna,
Withouten which in this rough wilderness
Backward goes he who toils most to advance.
And even as we the trespass we have suffered
Pardon in one another, pardon thou
Benignly, and regard not our desert.
Our virtue, which is easily o'ercome,
Put not to proof with the old Adversary,
But thou from him who spurs it so, deliver.
This last petition verily, dear Lord,
Not for ourselves is made, who need it not,
But for their sake who have remained behind us."

In order to understand the locality of the Paradiso, we must remember that the theory of the heavenly bodies, accepted in the time of Dante, makes the earth a fixed centre, around which all the others revolve. They stand in the following order: the Moon, Mercury, Venus, the Sun, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, the fixed stars, then the crystalline sphere, or the Primum Mobile, and then surrounding all the empyrean Heaven. These are the ten heavens of the Paradiso. In the first, the Moon, are the spirits of those who were forced

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to violate monastic vows; in Mercury, those who achieved noble deeds; in Venus, the spirits of lovers; in the Sun, the theologians and fathers of the Church; in Mars, the crusaders; in Jupiter, just kings; in Saturn, the contemplative; in the heaven of the fixed stars, the triumph of Christ; in the Primum Mobile, the angelic hierarchies; in the Empyrean the visible presence of God.

It must not be supposed that these are mere arbitrary and monotonous divisions. A logical connection runs through the whole; and the scenery from the entrance to Hell to the highest heaven is wonderfully picturesque, wild, and terrible, or sweetly and tranquilly beautiful, as the subject may require.

The amazing power of concise and graphic description, which Dante possesses, constitutes a style by itself—the Dantesque. No one else has approached this quality in Dante. The vast number of incidents and personages, in this passage through the unseen world, are so vividly delineated, with such conscientious fidelity, and minute detail, that they stand be-

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fore us with a perfectly startling reality. Our eyes see what Dante sees. We pass with him through the portals over which is inscribed: "Let all who enter here leave hope behind." We traverse with him the sea of ice; mount the beetling crags; stand before the flaming city of Dis; hear the wails of despair in the abodes of the lost. We look out with Dante upon the southern seas, and see far off upon the waves the trembling of the morning light. We ascend with him the mountain of purification. The wailing of despair is now lost in the triumphant strain of hope. We look forth from the summit with the consciousness of toil and suffering accomplished, and only reward and glory beyond. We ascend into the heavens, and move amid ineffable scenes; till, after converse with martyrs and apostles, we behold the white rose, the symbol of the bride of Christ, and then are bathed in the golden light which floods the heavens from the presence of God. It is all the most intense reality.

This intensity or terrible grasp with which

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Dante held a conception or idea is one great secret of his power. His mind held it in all its parts and details, and searched it through and through. If a lost spirit flitted past his imagination, it was held there, no indefinite form, but fixed in shape and size and color, sharp and distinct as the people whom he every day met. It is this amazing tenacity of imagination which shook men with fear or thrilled them with ecstasy in these revelations of the unseen world.

But not less conspicuous in Dante is his moral earnestness. Unlike Petrarch, the vain sentimentalist, who says more than he feels, Dante feels more than he says. It is no holiday amusement, or beguiling of idle hours, which he has for the world, but sternest warnings and clarion calls to duty. Here is the vast effort of a giant mind to grasp the true order of things in the world; to discern just how God would have human society adjust itself; and when, in this deep investigation, Dante thought he had seized upon some foundation principles and truths, he was compelled

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to utter what he thought and felt. Had he been silent, the fire within would have consumed him to ashes.

Now, what were these great principles which Dante felt that the world must have, and that it was his mission to reveal and burn into the hearts of men? In order to answer this, we must look at the Divina Commedia in the several aspects in which he would have us regard it. It is then, first, an embodiment of the popular conception of the unseen world. It gave form and substance to what men thought about it. But that is only one point of view in which it is to be considered. It is also a history of man in this life, with its experiences of punishment, purification, and possible perfection. It is a history also of nations, from their first beginnings in ignorance and superstition, through all the struggles of national life, until they reach the goal of prosperity and happiness. It is a history of humanity, toiling and struggling from the hell of unrestrained passion and unforgiven guilt on through the purifying processes which

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come to it from above, until at last aspiration is satisfied and hope fulfilled. And it is the divine Wisdom, personated in Beatrice, which guides men and nations and humanity through all their devious way to the happy, holy end of their pilgrimage.

Dante had a profound view of the philosophy of history, which led him to conceive clearly what he felt to be the true remedy for the disorders of the times in which he lived. The first great idea with him was *unity*—political and religious *unity*—the reconciling of secular and sacred antagonisms, and the establishment of a universal system, with the broadest comprehensiveness throughout the world. This necessarily included the idea of Italian nationality and unity, and to that idea he gave all the power of his extraordinary influence. The great obstacle in the way of the realization of this idea was the Papacy, aided and abetted by Charles of France. But the Papacy in the time of Dante not only stood thus in the way of Italian unity and freedom, but it was a nest of vipers, and it stirred the vast

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moral sense of Dante to its very depths with a storm of indignation. He consigns wicked popes to Hell without the slightest compunction. The Purgatorio resounds with lamentations, at the union of the temporal with the spiritual power of the popes; and even Paradise trembles with the denunciations which St. Peter pours upon his successor. He curses the existing Church as an incestuous she-wolf; he derides the idea of the pardoning of sin committed in the interest of papal power; he mourns that the Gospel and the great teachers have given place to popes and cardinals; he accepts the office imposed upon him by Beatrice as a Reformer of the Church; and he speaks as did St. Paul of the toil and weariness and suffering to which this mission must lead.

I have referred to these points, in the philosophical and religious views of Dante, without taking up your time by considering his greatness as a man of science, or his wonderful anticipation of some subsequent discoveries. I have done this because I wish to bring him

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into immediate relation to our own age, so that we may be brought under his mighty influence in regard to some of the great questions which are now agitating the world.

The grand conception which lies at the basis of the Divina Commedia is that of *progress*. It recognizes the unfolding and development of some great purpose in the world's history. Dante sees this as clearly as does Tennyson, in our own day, who says:

"Yet I doubt not through the ages one increasing purpose runs,
And the thoughts of men are widened with the process of the suns."

It was this idea which brought Dante into such violent antagonism with the dominant powers. The powers that be, whether ecclesiastical or secular, will almost universally be arrayed against the development of ideas, or the wider application of those already received. It is a consequence of the universal law, that good to men is purchased by suffering on the part of those who bestow it, and that suffering usually comes as a result of the struggle of moral

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principle and conscientious conviction against the claims of established authority. This is the struggle which is going on in our own day, the same principles precisely reappearing as in the thirteenth century, only on a wider and higher plane. This struggle led to the late war in this country. It was the antagonism between moral ideas and the established order of things; and even if a whole continent is bathed in blood, the moral ideas must prevail. It is the struggle which is now shaking the very foundations of social order throughout the civilized world. It brings with it a new order of things, by peaceful methods, or else anarchy, and through anarchy the progress at which it aims. Old things must pass away, except in the eternal ideas enshrined within them. That is the irreversible law of progress, and each age must open the way to a wider, freer order of things, for all things must be made new.

It is this eternal movement and renovation in society which draws the line between men in whom moral earnestness is united with far-

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seeing vision of the true order of things, and those who have moral earnestness without intellectual grasp, or intellectual grasp without moral earnestness. The first are the true reformers, but are called Radicals and Revolutionists, in a contemptuous sense. Dante was reviled as such in his day, and excommunicated twenty years after his death, when, happily, he was beyond the reach of the papal power. His works were burned at the stake. The latter call themselves Conservatives, but by obstinately standing still and closing their eyes, the very things they would conserve pass beyond them, and leave in their hands only the perishable husks of principles and ideas which in the far advance have taken on new and more beautiful and beneficent forms.

It is not to be supposed that every thing which proposes itself as new is to be received as a matter of course. The sagacity of the true reformer consists in the accuracy with which he detects the process by which the new is developed from the old, so that nothing really valuable in the old is sacrificed.

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Dante possessed this sagacity in a pre-eminent degree. Those who, amid a wide-spread degeneracy from this original type, have preserved it in something of its original purity, are the true Reformers of our own day.

That splendid dream of Italian nationality which haunted the great soul of Dante, how is it struggling towards its realization at the present time! And how remarkable it is that the antagonism to this idea proceeds from the same two-fold source as in the time of Dante—the Papacy, and the ruler who sits upon the throne of France! But the blood which was shed on the soil of Italy, in Dante's time, the blood which has been shed in many a generation since, will not be in vain. The thoughts of Dante live to-day in the Italian heart. The spirit of Dante stands also by all those who, at the present day, assert that which is liberal as opposed to that which is narrow and exclusive; those who deny the right of mere ecclesiasticism to repress individuality or fetter the expression of thought; and his intense anti-sacerdotalism would grind to powder the pretensions of those who would

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impose once more the rule of priestcraft on the world. Our age witnesses a strange reaction toward the worn-out follies and superstitions of the middle ages, the ages before Dante lived; and while Dante's great soul leaped forward seven centuries to hail the day which was to come, they creep back seven centuries, to burrow in the intellectual and moral servitude which roused Dante's withering indignation and scorn. It was these retrogressive principles, the obstinate determination of those who held the power in Dante's time, that the world should stand still, that wrung Dante's heart with untold suffering.

"Ah! from what agonies of heart and brain,
What exultations trampling on despair,
What tenderness, what tears, what hate of wrong,
What passionate outcry of a soul in pain;
Uprose this poem of the earth and air,
This mediæval miracle of song."

It is a strange delight to one who believes in progress and anticipates a better future for the race, and to whom whatever is truly generous and liberal is dear, to feel that he sits at the feet of a great world-teacher like Dante. We

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may go forth in imagination with the spirit of Dante, whose thoughts still live all around us, into the great harvest-fields of the world. As we see so much of promise that comes to naught, so many waste-places where all seems dead, we might be faint-hearted and despair, but the prophetic voice of the great Florentine will reassure us, and we shall almost hear the stirring of new life beneath the soil, the bursting forth of new principles and ideas, everywhere springing into luxuriant life, and we shall see the light of a new day just breaking over the distant hills.

"O star of morning and of liberty
O bringer of the light, whose splendor shines
Above the darkness of the Apennines,
Forerunner of the day that is to be!
The voices of the city and the sea,
The voices of the mountains and the pines
Repeat thy song, till the familiar lines
Are footpaths for the thought of Italy!
Thy fame is blown abroad from all the heights,
Through all the nations, and a sound is heard
As of a mighty wind, and men devout,
Strangers of Rome, and the new proselytes,
In their own language hear thy wondrous word,
And many are amazed, and many doubt."

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